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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From *Urry's* Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From *Tyrwhitt's* Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----
Of ditees and of songes glade,
The which he---made,
The londe fulfilled is over all. GOWER.

My maister CHAUCER---chiefe poete of Bretayne----
Whom all this londe schulde of ryght preferre,
Sith of our langage he was the lode-sterre----
That made first to dystylle and rayne
The gold dewe dropys of speche and eloquence
Into our tunge thrugh his excellence. LYDGATE.

The honour of English tonnis dede----
My mayster CHAUCER, flour of eloquence,
Mirrour of fractuous entendement,
Universel fadir in science----
This londis verray treiour and richesse----
The firste fynder of our fayre langage. OCCLEVE.

Venerabill CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,
Hevinly trumpet, orlege and regulere,
In eloquence balme, condict and diall,
Mylky fountane, clere strand, and rais riall,
Of fresche endite throw Albion iland braid. DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! rose of rethouris all,
As in oure toung flour imperial
That raise in Brittane evir, quha reidis right
Thou beiris of Maker the triumphs royall,
The fresche enamill termes celestiall:
This mater couth hail illuminit full bright,
Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,
Surmounting every toung terrestriall
As far as Mari's morrow dois midnight. DUNBAR.

VOL. VI.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1782.

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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

VOL. VI.

CONTAINING HIS

CANTERBURY TALES, *viz.*

COKES TALE OF GAMEL. | THE PARDON. AND TAPST.
FLOWMANS TALE, | THE MARCH. SECOND TALE.
&c. &c. &c.

But nathelesse certain
I can right now no thrifty Tale fain,
But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly
On metre, and on riming craftily)
Hath fayd hem in fwiche English as he can
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
And if he have not fayd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath fayd hem in another.——
Who fo that wol his large Volume feke. TALES, *ver.* 4465.

Dan CHAUCER, well of English undefil'd,
On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fil'd——
Old Dan Geffrey, in whofe gentle fpright
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell——
He whilft he lived was the foveraigne head
Of fhepherd's all—— SPENSER.

Old CHAUCER, like the morning ftar,
To us difcovers day from far;
His light thofe mifts and clouds diffolv'd
Which our dark nation long involv'd;
But He defcending to the fhades
Darkneſs again the age invades. DENHAM.

CHAUCER, him who firſt with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers——His legends blithe
He fang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each eſtate and age
The faibleſs and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying——
Him who in times——
Dark and untaught began with charming verſe
To tame the rudeneſs of his native land. AKENSIDE.

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THE CANTERBURY TALES.

THE COKE'S TALE OF GAMELYN.

Now lithin and liſtinith, and
Herkinith your aright,
And ye ſhullin herè me tell
You of a doughti knight.
Sir Johan of Boundis clepid was
This ilkè knight'is name;
Wele coudin he of noriture,
And eke of mochil game.

The Coke's Tale of Gamelyn] So many of the mſſ. have this Tale that I can hardly think it could be unknown to the former editors of this poet's Works; nor can I think of a reaſon why they neglected to publiſh it. Poſſibly they met only with thoſe mſſ. that had not this Tale in them, and contented themſelves with the number of Tales they found in thoſe mſſ. If they had any of thoſe mſſ. in which it is I cannot give a reaſon why they did not give it a place amongſt the reſt, unleſs they doubted of its being genuine; but becauſe I find it in ſo many mſſ. I have no doubt of it, and therefore make it publick, and call it the fifth Tale. In all the mſſ. it is called 'The Coke's Tale, and therefore I call it ſo in like manner: but had I found it without an inſcription, and had been left to my fancy to have beſtowed it on which of the pilgrims I had pleaſed, I ſhould certainly have adjudged it to the Squire's Yeoman, who though as minutely deſcribed by Chaucer and characterized in the third place, yet I find no Tale of his in any of the mſſ.: and becauſe I think there is not any one that would fit him ſo well as this, I have ventured to place his picture before this Tale, tho' I leave the Cook in poſſeſſion of the title. *Urry.*

of him were agaſt;
eldiſt deſerv'd his fadir's curſe,
had it at the laſt.
he godè knighte his fadir did
ſo long and yore,
Deth was comin him unto,
handlid him full ſore.
he godè knight ycarid moch,
ſike there as he lay,
that his childerin ſhuldè
n after his day.
e haddè ben widè where, but
huſbondè he was;
he londe which that he had
verray purchas;
id fayn he woldè that it were
d among them all,
everich of them had his pare

He ſent them word by letteris
That they ſhuld hyè blyve
If that they wol ſpekin with him
While that he was on live.
Sone as thoſe knightis herdin how
Thus ſekè that he lay,
Tho haddè they no mannir reſt
Nothir by night nor day
Tyll that they comin unto him,
There as he layd him ſtill,
Upon his deth'is bedde for to
Abidin Godd'is will.
Thus then ſaidin the godè knight,
Sekè there as he lay,
Lordis, I warnè you forſothe,
Withoutin any nay,
I may no lengir livin here
In this ſorowful ſtound,
For thorough Godd'is will ſupreme
Dethe drawith me to ground.
There ne was no one of them alle,
That herdin him aright,
That thei ne haddè mochil routh
Upon that ilkè knight;
And ſeidè, Sir, for Godd'is love
Ne diſmayin you nought,
God may don botè of balè
Which that is now ywrought.

r the love of me,
ı and dreſſith my londis
ng my ſonis thre.
d, frendis, for the love of God
ı them nat amys,
orgettith not Gamelyn,
ɔngè ſone that is.
ıith hedè unto that one
ll as to that other;
ıe ye ſein any heir
elpè woll his brother.
lettin they the knighte liggin
that was not in hele,
thei wentin to counſaile
dis for to dele;
ɔ delin them all to oon
ıs ther only thought,

And evèrich of them ſeidin
Till othir fullè loude,
His bretherin mowe give him londe
Whan that he godis koude.
Whan they had delid the londis
Aftir their owne will,
Tho camin they unto the knight
There as he lay full ſtill,
And toldin unto him anon
How that they hadd ywrought,
And the knight there as he ſeke lay
Ylikid it right nought.
Then ſeidè the knight angrily,
I ſware by Seint Martyn
For all that which ye have ydone
Yet is the londè myn.
For Godd'is love, my neighbouris,
Standith ye allè ſtill,
And I woll delin my londe
Aftir myn ownè will.
Johan myn eldiſt ſone ſhall
Y havè plowis five,
That was my fadir's heritage
While that he was on live;
And my middilliſt ſonè ſhall
Five plowis have of lond
That I holpe for to gettin
With myn own rightè hond;

. lawis con of lond,
Gamèlyn'is love that
s my bequeſt may ſtond.
'hus delid hath the gode knightè
.ondè be his dai,
ıt upon his deth'is beddè,
ſike there as he lay:
ınd ſone aftirwerdis he
as a ſtonè ſtill,
. dyid whan the tymè came,
t was Criſt'is will.
.non aftir that he was dede.
l undir graſs ygrave,
› ſonè the eldir brothir
ylid the yongè knave.
Ie tokin into his hondis
londis and his lede,
d alſo Gamèlyn himſelf

His parkis eke, and his wodis,
And diddè nothyng wel,
And ſithin he it aboughtè
On his own feire fell.
So longè tyme was Gamèlyn
In his brother's Hall,
For the ſtrengiſt of godè will
They doutidin him all.
There ne was none wight in that place,
Nothir yongè ne olde,
That woldè wrathin Gamèlyn
Were he nevir ſo bold.
Gamelyn ſtode upon a day
In his brother's yerde,
And he began with his hondè
To handilin his berde.
He thoughtin upon his londis,
That layin long unſawe,
And alſo of his feire okis,
That dounè were ydraw.
His parkis werin al brokin,
And al his deir reved;
Of allè his gode ſtedis noon
Was there with him beleved;
His houſis werein unhelid
And full evilly dight;
Tho thought this yongè Gamèlyn
It wentè not aright.

And swore by Godd is boke,
Thou ſhalt y go bake, luke, thy ſelf;
I wol not be thy coke.
How, brothir Gamèlyn, quod he,
Thus anſweriſt me thou?
Thou ſpakiſt nevir ſoothe a word
Yet as thou doiſt now.
By my faith, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
Now me it thinkith nede;
Of all the harmis that I have
I nevir yit toke hede.
My parkis ben y brokin, and
My deir ben yreved;
Of myn harnis and my ſtedis
Noght is there me beleved.
Al that my fadir me bequethe
Al goith now to ſhame,
And therefore have thou Godd's curſe,

l faign to have
ide.
ou gadiling,

Gamèlyn,
inge,
e havin
yng.
ng than the,
ht,
dy,
ht.
Gamèlyn
,
meinè,
;
ele this boy,
it,
hir time

l, yong Gamèlyn,
. . . . . .
hou havin
ou myn.
algatis

hou havin
one.

into his hond nomin,
Gamèlyn was awarè tho,
He forſaugh them comin.
  Tho Gamèlyn ſaugh them comin
He lokid ovir all,
And wæs warè of a peſtil
Stodè undir the wall.
  And Gamèlyn was fully light,
And thidir gan he lepe,
And droffe alle his brother's men
Right ſonè on an hepe.
  He lokid like a wild lion,
And laidin on gode wone;
Tho whan his brothir ſeyè that
He begannè to gonne.
  He fleigh up untill a loftè,
And ſhet the dorè faſt:
Thus Gamèlyn with his peſtil

What now? ſeide Gamèlyn; brothir,
Evil motè ye the;
Wollè ye beginnin contek
And than ſo ſonè ſle?
Gamèlyn ſought his brothir tho
Whithir he was yflowe,
And ſaugh where that he lokid out
At a ſolere windowe.
Brothir, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
Comith a litil nere,
And I woll techin the a plaie
Attè the bokillere.
His brothir to hym anſwerid,
And ſwore by Seint Richere,
While the peſtil is in thyn honde
I woll comin no nere.
Brothir, I woll makin the pece,
I ſwere by Criſt'is ore;
Caſtith away the peſtil tho,
And wrathè the na more.
I mot nedis, ſeide Gamèlyn,
Wrathè me at onys,
For that thou woldiſt make thy men
To brekin my bonis.
Ne had I haddin meyn and might,
In myn ownè twey armes,
To have y puſhin them fro me
They would have done me harmes.

I he did it not, my brothir,
But right for a fonding,
For to lokin if thou were ſtrong,
And art ſo very ying.
Come adoun then to me, quod he,
And grauntè me my bone,
Of oo thing I woll aſkin the,
And we ſhull faughtè ſone.
Adoun then camin his brothir,
That ſikill was and fell,
And was ſwithè right fore aghaſt
Of that ilkè peſtil.
He ſeidè, Brothir Gamèlyn;
Aſkè me now thy bone,
And loke that you me blamè, but
I grauntè it full ſone.
Tho ſeidin yongè Gamèlyn;
Brothir mynè, I wiſs

That thou ſhalt havè, Gamèlyn,
I ſwere by Criſt'is ore,
Al that thy fadir the bequetho,
Though thou woldiſt have more,
Thy londè, that now lyith lie,
Full well it ſhall be ſowe,
And thyne houſis yraiſid up
That now ben layd full lowe.
Thus ſeide the knight to Gamèlyn,
But only with his mouth,
And thoughtè but of falſèneſs,
As he right welè couth.
The knightè thoughtin on traiſon,
But Gamèlyn on noon,
And went and kiſſid his brothir,
And then they were at oon.
Alas for yongè Gamèlyn!
Nothing at all he wiſt
With ſwichè falſè traiſon
His brothir hath him kiſt.
Lithinith and leſtinith, and
Holdith you ſtille your tonge,
And ye ſhull herin ſtraunge talking
Of Gamèlyn the yonge.
There happid to be there beſide
Tryid a wraſtiling,
And therefore there was yſettin
A ram and als a ring.

And Gamèlyn was in a will
To wendè thereunto,
For to previn his mighte, and ſe
What that he couthè do.
Now brothir myne, quod Gamèlyn,
By holie Seint Richere
Thou muſtè nedis lene to night
Me a litil courſere,
That is freſhè to the ſporis,
Upon him for to ride;
I muſtin on an errand go
A littil here beſide.
Be God, ſeidè his brothir tho,
Of ſtedis in my ſtall
Goith and cheſith the beſt,
And ſparith none of alle,
Of ſtedis or of courſeris,
That ſtondith 'hem beſide,
And tellith me, my gode brothir,
Whithur thou wiltè ride.
Herè beſidis, brothir, is
Y cryid a wraſtling,
And therefore ſhallè ben y ſett
A ram and als a ring.
Mochè worſhip it were ſothly,
Brothir, unto us all
Might I the ram and als the ring
Bringin home to the Hall.

A ſtedè there was ſadilèd,
Smarth was it and eke ſlete;
Gamèlyn diddin a peire of
Sporis faſt on his fete.
He ſat his fote in the ſtirrop,
The ſtedè he beſtrode,
And towardis the wraſtiling
The yongè childè rode.
Tho Gamèlyn the yongè was
Riddin out at the gate
The falſè knight his own brothir
Lokkid it aftir thate.
And he beſoughtin Jeſu Chriſt,
That is of hevin king,
That he mightè brekin his nek
In that ilk wraſtiling.
Aſſone as Gamèlyn cam there
The wraſtling placè was
He lightid down of the ſtede
And ſtoddin on the gras.
And ther he herd a-frankelyn
Welo way for to ſing,
And beganin all bittirly
His handis for to wring.
Godè man, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
Why makiſt thou this fare?
Is there no man that may you help
Out of this nicè care?

t has wroughtin me ſorow,
he hath ſlayn my too ſonis
if that God them borrow.
woldè givin ten poundis,
eſu Criſt, and more,
ı the nonis I fond a man
andilin him ſore.
ɔdè man, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
thou this welè done?
lè my hors while that my man
with of my ſhone.
ıd help my man alſo to kepe
lothis and my ſtede,
I woll into the place gon
loke how I may ſpede.
God, ſeidè the frankelyn,
ll right ſo be don,
my ſilfin be thy man

Barefote and ungert Gamèlyn
Into the ringe came,
Allè that werin in the place
Hedin of him the name,
How he durſtin aventure him
On him to don his might
That was ſo doughti a champion
In wraſtling and in fight.
Upſtertè tho the champion
Full rapely right anon,
Towardis yongè Gamèlyn
He tho began to gon,
And ſeidè, Who is thy fadir,
And who is eke thy ſire?
Forſothè thou art a gret fole
For that thou camiſt hire.
Anon Gamèlyn anſwerid
The ſtout champion tho,
Thou knewiſt full wele my fadir
Whilè that he couthè go:
Whilis that he was on live,
I were by Seint Martyn,
Sir John of Boundis was his name,
And I am Gamèlyn.
Felawe, ſeidè the champion,
So evir mote I thrive,
I knew right welè thy fadir
While that he was on live;

chè ſhrew thou were.
en ſeidè yongè Gamèlyn,
ſwore bi Criſt'is ore,
am I oldir wox thou ſhalt
ndin me a more.
e God, ſeidè the champion,
lcome motè thou be;
me thou onys in my honde
altin thou nevir the.
It was welè within the night,
nd bright the mone ſhone,
Whan Gamèlyn and the champion
Togidir gan to gon.
The champion caſtè tornis
To Gamèlyn that was preſt,
And Gamèlyn ſtodin ſtillè,
And bad him don his beſt.
... ſeiden yongè Gamèlyn

Gamèlyn to the champion
Yede ſmartily anon,
Of all the tornis that he coude
He ſhewid him but one;
And keſt him on the liftè ſide
That thre ribbis to brak,
And thereunto his left armè,
That gaf a grettè crak.
Then ſeidè yongè Gamèlyn
Smertly to him anon,
Shall it be holdin for a caſt,
Or ellis go for none?
Bi God, ſeidè the champion,
Whedir ſo that it be,
He that ones comith in thyn hand
Shallin he nevir the.
Than ſeidè the frankèlyn, that
Thre ſonis there had lore,
Bleſſid be thou, yonge Gamèlyn,
That evir thou were bore!
For now unto the champion
This have I for to ſeie,
This is the yongè Gamèlyn
That taughtè the to pleie.
Ayen anſwerde the champion,
That likid nothyng well,
He is allè their maiſtir, and
His pleiè is right fell.

Allone withoutin ferk,
And ſeide, If there be any mo
Let them comè to werk.
The champion which that painid
Him to workin ſo ſore,
It ſemith by his countinaunce
That he willè no more.
Gamèlyn in the placè ſtode
Stillè as any ſtone
For to abidin wraſtiling,
But there ycomith none.
There ne was none with Gamèlyn
That woldè wraſtle more,
For he handilid the champion
So wonderouſly ſore.
Two gentilmeinè that owned the
Come to Gamelyn, God geve them g
Have done on

dè to them Gamèlyn,
well yfare,
yet halvindele
my ware.
ide the champion ſo broke,
elè ſwere
e that thereof bieth,
ſt it ſo dere.
de to him the frankèlyn,
in mochill care,
: ſaidè, whi lakkiſt
ıoche of his ware?
t Jame, that in Galis is,
y man has ſought,
ıoche too godè chepe
ı haſtin ybought.
at the wardinis werin
ɛ wraſtiling
:th, and brought Gamèlyn
ınd als the ring.
us wann yongè Gamèlyn
and eke the ring,
:è forth with mochil joy
:d in the morning.
ıthir ſe where that he come
he grettè rout,
he porter ſhute the gate,
in him without.

Now lithinith and leſtinith
Bothè yongè and old,
And ye ſhullin herè gamin
Of Gamèlyn the bold.
Gamèlyn comith thereunto
For to have comin in;
But all in vaine; the dore then was
Y ſhitt faſt with a pyn.
Than ſeidè yongè Gamèlyn,
Porter, undo the yate,
For many a godè mann'is
Sonnè ſtondith thereat.
Then anſwerid him the porter,
And ſwore by Godd'is berde,
Thou ne ſhalt, frendè Gamèlyn,
Comin into this yerde.
Thou lyiſt, ſeidè Gamèlyn,

aith, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
üle is ylore,
n fote as light as
ough thow had yſwore.
'n ovirtoke the porter,
:enè ywrak,
him full upon the nek,
ıe bon to brak;
ke him by that oon armè,
v him in a well;
ıdrid fadom it was depe,
herdè telle.
Gamèlyn the yongè thus
yid his play,
in the yerdè were
vin them away,
redin him full forè for
:e that he wrought,
he fayir cumpany
ıad thithir brought.
Gamèlyn yede to the gate
it up wide,
n allè the rout
woldin or ride;
:idè, Ye ben ywelcome
n any greve,
ol ben maiſteris here,
no man leve.

Partyn with me on twyn,
And if ye will don aftir me,
Whil any ſope is inn:
  And if my brothir grutchith us,
Or makith foulè chere,
Othir for ſpence of mete and drink
That we ſhull ſpendin here,
  I am the ovircatorir,
And bere our althir purſe,
He ſhallè have for his grutching
Sancta Maria's curſe.
  My brothir is but a nigon,
I ſwere by Criſt'is ore,
And we woll ſpendè largily
That he hath ſparid yore.
  And whoſo that makith grutching
That we do here ydwell,
He ſhall go unto the porter

All in a litil torrit his
Brothir laydè yſteke,
And ſaugh him waſtin his godis,
But durſtè not to ſpeke.
Right erli in a morrowning,
Upon the eightè day,
The geſtis come to Gamèlyn,
And woldè gon thir way.
Lordis, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
And wollin ye ſo hie?
Allè the wyne is not yet dronk,
So broukin I mine eye.
Yonge Gamèlyn in his hertè
Was ſorowfull and wo
Whan that his geſtis toke their leve
And fro him woldè go.
He woldè that they had dwellid
Lengir, and they ſeide Nay,
But bitaught Gamèlyn to God,
And bad him have gode dai.
Thus madè Gamèlyn his feſte,
And brought it well to end,
And aftirward his geſtis toke
Levè their way to wend.
Now lithinith and liſtinith,
And holdith you your tonge,
And ye ſhullin herè gamin
Of Gamèlyn the yonge.

How Gamèlyn was dight.
Allè the while that Gamèlyn
Had hold his mangerie
His brothir thought on him bewrek
With his falſe trecherie;
Tho whan that Gamèlyn'is geſte
Y ridin were and gon
Gamèlyn ſtode anon alone,
Frendè tho had he none.
Tho aftir this full ſone it fell,
Within a littil ſtound,
That Gamèlyn was takin, and
Full hardly was he bound.
Than forth comith the falſè
Out of the ſolerè,
And to Gamèlyn his brothir
He goith fullè nere,
ridin unto Gamèlyn,

For, brothir, thou haſtiu haddè,
I ſwere by Seint Richere,
Of fiftene plowis of londè
This full ſixtenè yere;
And of allè the beſtis which
Thou haſtè forth ybredd,
That my fadir to me bequethe
Upon his deth'isbedd:
Of allè this full ſixtene yere
I gevè the the prow,
For the metè and the drinkè
That we have ſpendid now.
Than thus ſeidè the falſè knight,
(Full evil mote he the)
Herkinith, brothir Gamelyn,
What I woll gevin the;
For of my body, brothir, heir
Y gettin have I none;
I wollè makin the my heir,
I ſwerè by Seint John.
Par mafay, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
And if that it ſo be,
And thou thinkiſt as thou ſeyiſt,
May God yeldin it the!
Nothing wiſtè yong Gamèlyn
Of his brother'is gile,
And therefore he him begilid
In verry littil while.

I ſworè in that wrathe, and
In that my gretè mote,
That thou ſhuldiſt ybondè be
Both hondè and eke fote:
And therefore I beſeechè the,
My brothir Gamèlyn,
Letith thou noght me be forſworn,
As brothir art thou mine;
But letith me ybindin the
Both hondè and eke fote,
For me to holdin myne avough,
Right as I the behote.
Brothir, tho ſeide Gamèlyn,
As ſo motin I the,
Thou ſhaltè not ben forſworin
For the love of me.
Tho madin thei this Gamèlyn
To ſitte might he not ſtand,

His brothir madè leſingis
On him ther as he ſtode,
And toldè them that comin in
That Gamèlyn was wode.
Gamèlyn ſtode to a poſt
Y bondin in the Hall,
And tho that ther ycomin in
Lokid upon him all.
Evir ſtodè yong Gamèlyn
Evin boltè upright,
But mete nor drink ne had he none
Nowthir by day ne night.
Tho ſeidè yongè Gamèlyn,
Brothir myn, by my hals
Now I have wele eſpyid that
Thou art a parti fals.
Had I but wiſtè that treſon
That thou haddiſt yfond
woldin have gevin ſtrokis
I had ben ybound.
Gamèlyn ſtodè thus bondin
ſtill as any ſtone
too dayis and too nightis,
metè had he none.
hen ſeide at laſt this Gamèlyn,
ſtodè boundin ſtrong,
Spencer, methinkith that
al to long;

And for-thi I woll departin
With the of my fre lond.
  Than him anſwerid this Adam,
Which that was the Spencer,
I have yſervid thy brothir
This full ſixtenè yere,
  And if I ſhuldè letin you
To gon out of his boure
He woldin aftirwardis ſeye
That I were a traytour.
  Adam, anſwerid Gamèlyn,
So broukin I myn hals,
Thou ſhaltè findin my brothir
At the laſt rightè fals;
  And therefore, brothir Adam, me
Loſè out of my bonds,
And I wollè departin with

Adam, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
As ſo mowin I the,
I woll holdè the covènaunt,
An thou too wollè me.
Anon as Adam his lordè
To beddè was ygone,
Adam tokè the kaies, and lat
Gamèlyn out anon.
He unlokid yonge Gamèlyn
Both hondis and eke fete,
On hope of the avauncèment
Which that he him bèhete.
Then ſeidè yongè Gamèlyn,
Thankid be Godd'is ſonde,
For now that I am yloſid
Both fote and alſo hond!
Had I but etin a litil,
And thereto dronk aright,
There is none in this houſè that
Shuld bindè me this night.
Tho Adam tokè Gamèlyn,
As ſtill as any ſtone,
And haddin him into the ſpence
Right rapily anon;
And ſettin him to his ſoupere
Right in a privie ſtede,
And badin hym do gladily,
And Gamèlyn ſo dede.

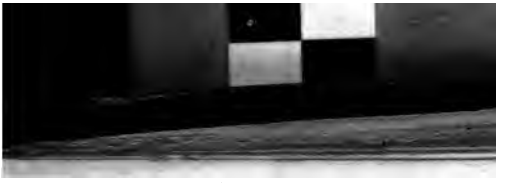
For me to go to my brothir,
And gerdin of his hede?
No, Gamèlyn, ſeidin Adam,
It ſhallè not be ſo,
But I can tellè the a rede
That is yworth the too.
I wotè wele forſothè that
(And this it is no nay)
We ſhullin have a mangerie
Rightè upon Sonday;
Of abbotis and priouris
Full many here ſhal be,
And othir men of holie cherch,
As I can tellè the:
Thou ſhaltè ſtond up by the poſt,
As thou were bondè faſt

And if that they will borrow the
That werin a gode game,
Than werin thou out of prison
And I als out of blame;
But if that evèrich of them
Sayè unto us Nay,
I shullè don anothir thing,
I swerè by this day.
Thou shallè have a godè staffe,
And I woll have another,
And Crist'is cursè have that oon
That failè shall that othir.
Ye, for God, seidè Gamèlyn,
I say it right for me
If that I failin on my side
Than evil mote I the.
If that we shullin algatis
Assoile them of thire synne;
Warnith me, my brothir Adam,
Whan that we shall begynn.
Now Gamèlyn, seidin Adam,
By Seintè Charitè
I wollè warnè the beforn
Whan that the time shall be.
Whan that I twinkin upon the
Lokè for to be gon,
And cast away the fetteris,
And *come to me* anon.

If that they thullin wernè me
To bring the out of bendes
I wollè ſettin gode ſtrokis
Full right upon their lendes.
Tho the Sondy was ycomin,
And theſe folk to the feſte;
Faire they werein ywelcomid
Bothè the leſte and meſte.
And evir as they at the Hall
Dorè were comin in
They evèrich caſtin an eie
On yongè Gamèlyn.
The falſè knight his own brothir
So full of trecherie,
Allè the geſtis that there were
At that ilk mangerie

It ne is not wele yſerwid,
Be God that allè made,
That I ſhold ſittin here faſting
And othir men make glade.
The falſè knightè his brothir,
Thereas that he yſtode,
Toldin to allè his geſtis
That Gamèlyn was wode.
And Gamèlyn there ſtodè ſtill,
And anſwerid right noght,
But of Adam'is wordis hę
Heldè ſtill in his thought.
Tho Gamèlyn began to ſpeke,
Right doulefully withall,
Unto the grettè lordis that
Y ſatyn in the Hall:
My Lordlingis, tho ſeidin he,
For Criſt'is paſſion
Helpin to bringè Gamèlyn
Out of thilkè priſon.
Than ſeidè to him an abbot,
(Sorow upon his cheke!)
He ſhallin have Criſt'is curſe
And Seintè Maries eke,
That ſhall the out of this priſon
Beggin owthir borow,
But evir worthè hym full wele
That doth the mykil ſorow.

Allè that the ſhall borrowin
ſotè them foulè fail;
and thus yſeidin allè they
That werin in the Hall.
Than ſeidè to him a priour,
Evil mowin he thrive!
It is grettè ſorow and care,
Boy, that thou art on live.
On, on, ſeidè yonge Gamèlyn,
So broukin I my bone,
Now that I havin eſpyid
That frendis have I none.
A curſid mot he worthè be,
Bothè fleſhè and blode,
That evir doth to priouris
Or abbotes any gode.
Anon Adam the Diſpencer
[illegible] hath the cloth,



Adam lokid on Gamèlyn,
And he was war anon,
And caſt awaie the fetteris,
And began for to gon.
Tho he camin unto Adam,
He toke to the one ſtaff,
And begannin to werkè wele,
And gode ſtrokis he gaff.
Gamèlyn came into the Hall,
And Adam Spencer both,
And lokid them all aboutin
As they haddè ben wroth.
Gamèlyn ſprenith holi watir
All with an okin ſpire,
That ſome of them that ſtode upright
Fillin into the fire.
There was no mannir lewdè man
That in the Hallè ſtode
That woldè doin Gamèlyn
Any thingè but gode.
But thei ſtodè beſidin, and
Letè them bothè werch,
For thei ne haddè no routhè
Of men of holi cherch.
Of abbot or of priour, or
Of monk or of canon,
That Gamèlyn hath ovirtoke,
Anon they yedin doun.

Tho Gamèlyn, ſeidè Adam,
For Scintè Charite
Payith, I pray, gode liveray,
And for the love of me;
And I wollè kepin the dore;
Ie evir here I maſſe
Er that they ben aſſoilyid
Ther ſhallè noon ypaſſe.
Doutè the noght, ſeide Gamèlyn,
While that we ben in fere;
But kepè thou welè the dore
And I woll werkin here;
Bèſturrith the, gode Adam, and
Ne lettith none yſle,
And we ſhall tellè largily
How many here there be.
To Gamèlyn ſeidin Adam,
Doith them all but gode.

Thus Gamèlyn and Adam hath
Y wroughtin rightè faſt,
And pleidin with the monkis tho,
And madè them agaſt.
Forth hidir they comè riding
Full jolily with ſwaines,
But home agen they werin ledde
In cartis and in waines.
Tho as they haddin all ydone
Than ſeidin a gray frere,
Alas! alas! my Lord Abbot,
What diddè we now here?
Tho that we hithir did ycome
It was a coldè rede;
Us had far bettir ben at home
With watir and with brede.
While Gamèlyn made orderis
Of monkis and of frere
Evir ſtodè his brothir ſtille,
And madè foulè chere.
Tho Gamèlyn up with his ſtaff,
That he full welè knew,
And grettin him upon the nek,
That he him overthrewe,
A litil above the girdil
The riggin bone to braſt,
And ſett him in the fetteris
There as he ſattin arſt.

And ſwithe as they ynaue ...
Wrokin them on their ſone,
They aſkid for the watir, and
They wiſhin them anon.
What ſome of them for their lovè,
And ſomè for their awe,
Allè the ſervauntis ſervid
Them of the beſtè law.
The ſhereff was thennis away
But about a five myle,
And all was toldin unto him
Within a littil whyle,
How Gamèlyn and Adam had
Ydon a ſorry res,
Boundin and woundin many men

Now four-and-twenty yongè men,
That holdin them full bold,
Comin unto the ſhiregereve,
And ſeidè that they wold
Both Gamèlyn and eke Adam
Yfettè be the way;
The ſhiregereve gafè them leve
Tho ſoth as I you ſay.
Thes yongè meinè hidin them
Faſt, woldè they not lynne
Tyll that they comin to the gate
There Gamèlyn was inne.
Thy knokidin upon the gate,
The porter tho was nye,
And lokid forth out at an hole,
As man that was full ſlye.
The porter had beholdin them
But for a litil while,
He lovid welè Gamèlyn,
And was adrad of gile,
And forthi letè the wiket
Yſtondin fullè ſtill,
And aſkid them that ſtant without
What ywas their will?
For allè the gret cumpany
Than ſpake bot one alone,
Undo the gatis, porter, and
Latè us in ygone.

If that their wille it be,
We wollè ſpekin here with them
Two wordis othir thre.
  Fellaw, ſeidè the porter tho,
Standith thou ther yſtill,
And I woll wend to Gamèlyn
To wetin of his wille.
  And in wentè the porter tho
To Gamèlyn anon,
And ſeidè, Sire, I warnè you
That here be come your fone;
  For lo! the ſhiregerev'is men
Now ben all at the gate
For to ytekin you bothè;
Shallè ye not eſcape.
  Porter, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn

Adam, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
Lokè the to be gon,
We havè foomen at the gate,
And frendis nevir one.
It ben the ſhiregerev'is men
That hithir ben comin,
They ben yſwore togideris,
That we ſhull be nomin.
To Gamèlyn ſeidè Adam,
Hiè the righte belyve,
And if I failè the this day
Than evil mote I thryve.
And we ſhullin ſo welcomè
The ſhiregerev'is men,
That ſome of them I trow ſhall make
Their beddis in the fen.
Then thorough the poſternè gate
Yong Gamèlyn out went,
And a gode ſturdie cartè ſtaffe
In his hondè he hent.
And Adam Spencer hentè ſone
Anothir grettè ſtaffe
For to helpè yong Gamèlyn,
And gode ſtrokis he gaffe.
Adam yfellid hath his tweyne,
And Gamélyn felled thre,
The tothir ſettè fete on erth,
And faſt began to flè.

It woldè makin mann'is brayne
To lyin in his hode.
  Yong Gamèlyn tho ſtodè ſtill,
And lokid him about,
And ſaidc, The ſhiregereve comith
With a full grettè rout.
  Adam Spencer, ſeid Gamèlyn,
My rede it is now this,
Abidin we not lengir here
Leſt we farin amys.
  I rede that we to wode ygonn
Er that we be yfound;
Betir is there loſe for to gonn
Than in the toune ybound.
  Adam then tokè by the hond

The ſhiregereve lightid adoune,
And went into the Hall,
And fond the lord yfetterid
Full faſtè therewithall.
The ſhireve tho unfetterid
Him rightè ſone anon,
And ſentin aftir a gode leche
To hele his riggè bon.
Letè we now this falſè knight
Lie in his mochill care,
And tellè we of Gamèlyn,
And lokè how he fare.
Gamèlyn into the wild wode
Yſtalkid is full ſtille,
And Adam le Diſpencer it
Ylikid but right ille.
Tho Adam ſwore to Gamèlyn,
And that be Seint Richere,
Now I ſay that it is mery
To ben a diſpencer;
That muchè levire me werin
The kayis for to bere,
Than walkin in this wildè wode
My clothis all to tere.
Adam, ſeidè yong Gamèlyn,
Diſmayè the right noght,
For many a gode mann'is child
In carè *is ybrought.*

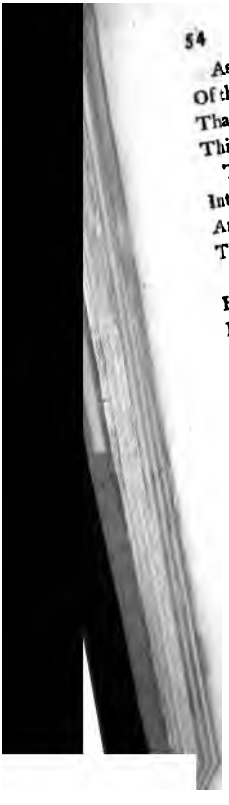
and nigh ...

Tho Gamèlyn undir the w...
Wodè lokid aright,
Full ſevin ſcore of yongè men
He ſaugh right wel ydight;
Allè were ſattè at their mete
In a compas about;
Adam, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
Now havin ye no doute,
For aftir balè comith bote,
Thorough Godd'is grete might;
Methinkith of mete and of drink
That I havin a ſight.
Adam le Diſpencer lokid
Tho undir wodè bowe,
And whan that he the metè ſaugh
...owe;

Lo! yongè men, ſeide the maiſtir
Outlaw, by the gode rode
I am aware of ſome geſtis,
Pray God ſendin us gode!
Loke! yondir be two yongè men
That ben right wel adight,
A! peradventure they ben mo,
Whoſo lokid aright.
Ariſeth up quick yongè men,
And fettè them to me,
For it is gode that we wetin
What meinè that they be.
Up thei ſtertin quik at that word,
Sevin fro the dinnere,
And they mettin with Gamèlyn
And Adam Diſpencere.
Whan that they werin ney to them
Than ſeidè thus that one,
Yeldith up to us, yongè men,
Your bowis and your ſtone.
Than ſeidè to them Gamèlyn,
That yongè was of elde,
Full mochil ſorow mote they have
That unto you ſhall yelde:
I curſè woll none othir wight
But right mine ownè ſelve
Tho ye may fettin unto you
Fyve, and *than be* ye twelve.

Right mildly and ſtill,
Comith aforin our maiſtir,
And ſay to him thy will.
Yongè man, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
Upon your leaute
Tellith what man your maiſter is
Which that ye with ybe.
Tho allè they anſwerid him
At ones without leſing,
Our maiſter is ycorounid
Of Outlawis the King.
Adam, ſeide yongè Gamèlyn,
Go we in Criſt'is name,
He may nothir metè nor drink
Y wernè us for ſhame;
And if that he be hendè, and

Tho Gamèlyn and Adam both
Y wentè forth in fere,
And they both gretè the maiſtir
Which that they fondè there.
Than ſeidè to them the maiſtir,
That King was of Outlawes,
What do ye ſeke, ye yongè men,
Undir the wodè ſhawes?
Yong Gamèlyn anſwerid tho
The King with his coroune,
He muſtè nedis walk in wodes
That may not walk in toune.
Sire, we walkè not here in wodes
Non harmè for to do,
But if peradventure we mete
A dere to ſhete thereto,
As meinè that ben right hungry,
And mow no metè fynd,
And very hardè ben beſtad
Undir the wodè lynd.
Of Gamèlyn'is wordis tho
The maiſter haddè routhe,
And ſeidè to them, Ye ſhall have
Inow, have God my trouthe.
Anon he baddè them ſittin
Doune for to takè reſt,
And baddè them etin and drink,
And that too of the beſt.



As they were eting and drinking
Of the beſt wele and fine,
Than ſeide the ton to the tothir
This is yonge Gamèlyne.
Tho was the maiſter of outlawes
Into counſaile nomin,
And told how it was Gamèlyn
That thithir was comin.
Anon as he had herdin all
How that it was befall,
He madè Gamèlyn maiſtir
Undir him o're them all.
Within the third weke aftir this
To him comith tiding,
To the maiſtir of outlawis,
Which that now was their king,
That he ſhuldè ycomin home,
For that his pees was made;
And of that joyfull tiding he
Was wonderouſly glade.
Tho ſeide he to his yongè m
The fothè for to tell,
To me be comin tidingis
I may no lengir dwell.
Tho was yong Gamèlyn a
Withoutin tarying,
Made maiſtir of outlawis, a
Ycorounid their king:

Tho was yong Gamèlyn crounid
The King of the Outlawes,
And among them walkid a while
Undir the wodè shawes,
The falsè knight his brothir now
Was shiregereve and Sire,
And lete his brothir be endite
For hatè and for ire.
Tho werin all his bondemenè
Sory and nothing glad
Whan that Gamèlyn their lordè
Wolves Hede was cryed and made,
And sentin outè his meinè
Where they mightin him fynd,
For to sekin yonge Gamèlyn
Undir the wodè lynd,
To tellè to him tidingis
The winde was ywent,
And allè his gode revid was,
And all his men yshent.
Whan that they haddè hym foundin
On kneys they them sette,
And adoun with their hodè, and
Gamèlyn their lord grette.
They seiden, Sire, now wrathè not
On for the godè rode,
We have brought you tidingis,
They be nothing godè.

That I ne hadd brokin his nek
Whan I his riggè brak.
Goith, and gretith you welè
My houſbondis an wif,
I wollè ben at the next ſhire,
So havè God my lif.
Gamèlyn camè well redy
Unto the nextè ſhire,
And there the falſe knight his brothir
Was bothè Lord and Sire.
Gamèlyn camè boldilich
Into the Motè Hall,
And put adoun his hode among
The lordilingis all.
God ſavè you, Lordilingis!

ught the falſe knight on him
: ben awreke,
kin Gamèlyn ;
› more yſpeke.
there be no mannir grace,
yn at laſt
riſoun ycaſtin,
d full faſt.
mèlyn hath a brothir
d was Sir Ote ;
d hend a knight he was
ı gon on fote.
ıon yede a meſſager
gode knight,
him altogethir
èlyn was dight.
Sir Ote herdin had
èlyn was dight,
ht paſſing ſory tho,
nothing light :
ꝫ ſaddle him a ſtede,
the weie he name,
ıis tweie bretherin
there he came.
ꝫ this Sir Otę unto
erevè tho,
t only thre brethren,
: nevir mo,

Sir Ote, ſeidè the falſè knight,
Now letè be thy curs;
By God for theſe thi wordis he
Shallè farin the wors.
Now to the king'is priſoun he
Is lefully ynome,
And there he ſhall abidin
Untill the juſtice come.
But parde, ſeidè Sir Ote tho,
Bettir it ſhall ybe
I biddin him unto maynprise,
And that thou grauntè me,
Untill the nextè ſitting ſhall
Come of deliveraunce,
And than lete Gamèlyn fairely
Yſtondin [illegible]

n it wele, ſeide Sir Ote,
ll ſo ybe;
vir him anon,
him to me.
nèlyn was delivered
his brothir,
ight ydwellid in fere
ith the tothir.
norow ſeide Gamèlyn
)te the hend,
r, he ſeidè, forſothe
n the wend,
ı how my yongè men
din their lif,
ir that they livin now
lles in ſtrif.
, tho anſwerid Sir Ote,
oldè rede,
hat alle the cark
ı on my hede;
an that the juſtice ſittith,
be not yfound
n be takin, and
le be ybound.
, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
he right noght,
ntè Jame in Galis,
y man hath ſought,

And thus haſt thou yprifounid
The beſtè of us all;
Soche anothir brothir as thou
Evil mote him befall!
Sir Ote, ſeidè the falſè knight,
Now letè be thy curs;
By God for theſe thi wordis he
Shallè farin the wors.
Now to the king'is priſoun he
Is lefully ynome,
And there he ſhall abidin
Untill the juſtice come.
But parde, ſeidè Sir Ote tho,
Bettir it ſhall ybe
I biddin him unto maynprife,
And that thou grauntè me,
Untill the nextè ſitting ſhall
Come of deliveraunce,
And than lete Gamèlyn fairely
Yſtondin to his chaunce.
Brothir, in ſoche a forewardè
I takin him to the,
And by thy fadir'is ſoulè,
That the begat and me,
If that he be not right redy
Whan that the juſtice ſitte
Thou ſhaltè berin the judgement,
For all thy grettè witt.

in it wele, ſeide Sir Ote,
ll ſo ybe;
ivir him anon,
him to me.
mèlyn was delivered
: his brothir,
ight ydwellid in fere
ith the tothir.
norow ſeide Gamèlyn
)te the hend,
r, he ſeidè, forſothe
n the wend,
ı how my yongè men
din their lif,
ir that they livin now
lles in ſtrif.
, tho anſwerid Sir Ote,
oldè rede,
hat alle the carl
ı on my hede;
ın that the juſtice ſittith,
be not yfound
n be takin, and
e be ybound.
, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
he right noght,
ntè Jame in Galis,
v man hath fought,

*W*han that the juſtice ...
Than ſeide Sir Ote to Gamèlyn,
God ſhelde the fro ſhame!
Comith whan that thou ſeiſt tyme,
And bring us out of blame.
Now lithinith and leſtinith,
And holdith you right ſtill,
And ye ſhullè herin how that
Gamèlyn had his will.
Anon Gamèlyn wentin his
Way undir the wode riſe,
And he yfondè there playing
His yongè men of priſe.
Tho was this yongè Gamèlyn
In hert right glad inow
Whan that he fond his yongè men
Undir the wodè bow.
...alwn and his yongè men

All the while that Gamèlyn was
Outlaw had he no curs;
There ne was no man that for him
Yferid ought the wors,
But abbotis and priouris,
And monkis, and chanon;
In them forfothe ne laft he noght
Whan er he might them nom.
While Gamèlyn and his yong men
Ymadè mirthis ryve,
The falfè knight his own brothir,
Evil motè he thryve!
For all this while he waft about,
Both one day and othir,
On purpofe for to hire the queft
To hangin his brothir.
Gamèlyn ftodin on a day,
And round him he beheld
The wild wodis and the fhawis
Within the wildè feld;
He thoughtin upon his brothir,
How that he him behete
That he ywoldin be redy
Whan that the juftice fete;
He thoughtin welè that he wolde,
Withoutin more delay,
Y comin afore the juftice
For to kepin his day;

And ſeidè to his yongè men,
Now dightith you full yare,
For whan that the juſtice ſittith
We mote nedis be there;
For I am undir a borow
Until that I comin,
And my brothir inſtede of me
To priſon ſhall be nomin.
Be Seint Jame, ſeide his yongè men,
And that thou rede thereto,
Ordeinith how it ſhallè be,
And it ſhall ſo be do.
While Gamèlyn was ycoming
There that the juſtice ſatt
The falſè knight his own brothir
Forgattin he not that,
To hire the meinè on his queſt
To hangin his brothir,
And though thei haddè not that oon
He wolde han that othir.
Tho comith yongè Gamèlyn
From undir the wode liſe,
And he broughtin along with him
His yongè men of priſe.
I ſe wele, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
The juſtice is yſette;
Go thou aforn us, Adam, and
Lokè how that it ſpette.

Gamèlyn letè unfettir
His brothir out of bend;
Than ſeidè to him Sir Otis,
His brothir that was hende,
Thou haddiſt almoſt, Gamèlyn,
Dwellid away to long,
For the queſtè is ygon out
On me that I ſhulde honge.
Brothir, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
God gevè me gode reſt,
This gode day they ſhull ben hongid
That ben upon the queſt;
And thereto the juſtice bothè,
That is the juggè man,
And eke the ſheriff our brothir,
For through him it began.
Than ſeidè yongè Gamèlyn
Unto the falſe juſtice,
Now is thi powir at an end,
You muſt nedis ariſe.
Thou haſt ygevin domis that
Ben evil allè dight;
I wollè ſettin in thi ſete,
And dreſſin them aright.
But the juſtice ſattin ſtillè,
And rooſè not anon,
And Gamèlyn with his ſwerdè
Clevid his chekè bone.

For I wollè ben the juſtice
This day domis to deme.
  Pray God ſpedè me this ilk dai
At this my newè werke!
And Adam, comith thou with me;
For thou ſhalt be my clerke.
  His meinè all anſwerid him,
And bad hym don his beſt,
And if thou to us havè nede
Thou ſhalt fyndin us preſt:
  For we wollè ſtondin with the
Whilis that we may dure,
And but that we werkin manly
Payith us then no hure.
  Yongè men, ſeidè Gamèlyn,

Gamèlyn letè unfettir
His brothir out of bend;
Than ſeidè to him Sir Otis,
His brothir that was hende,
Thou haddiſt almoſt, Gamèlyn,
Dwellid away to long,
For the queſtè is ygon out
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And dreſſin them aright.
But the juſtice ſattin ſtillè,
And rooſè not anon,
And Gamèlyn with his ſwerdè
Clevid his chekè bone.

Sorow havè that rekk,
Allè they werin yhongid
Full faſtè by the nekk.
  Thus endid hath the falſè knight
With all his trechèrie,
That evir haddè lad his life
In falſeneſs and folie.
  He was hongid up by the nek,
And nought by the purſe,
That was the mede that he had haddè
From his fadir'is curſe.
  Sir Ote was the eldiſt tho,
And Gamèlyn was yonge,
They wentin with their frendis, and
Paſſidin to the king.

is wight yonge men the king
them their gilt,
en in gode office the king
è them ypilt.
has wan yongè Gamèlyn
lè and his lede,
ake of him his enemies,
rtè them their mede.
ir Otè, his brothir dere,
him hath his heir,
in wedded Gamelyn
oth gode and faire.
lividin togidir wele
hat Chriſtè wolde,
in that was Gamèlyn
undir molde:
Ø ſhallè we allè here;
ere no man yfle.
ngin us unto the joie
ir ſhull ybe!

ith the legend of Gamelyn, called The Coke's Tale the mſſ. that I have ſeen and have this Tale.

And lige in graue up to the eare:
Thei ben feble both oxe and cowe,
Of 'hem n'is left but bone and ſkinne;
He ſhoke of ſhere, and coulter' off dro
And honged his harnis on a pinne.
He toke his tabarde and ſtaffe eke,
And on his hedde he ſet his hat,
And ſaied he would Saincte Thomas ſe
On pilgrimage he goth forth plat;
In ſcrippe he bare bothe bred and leke
He was forſwonke and all forſwat:
Men might have ſene through both hi
And every wang tothe where it ſat.

The Plowman's Prologue] This and the Tal
mſſ. that I have ſeen, nor in any of the firſt pri
ton and Pynſent, I preſume, durſt not publiſh it;

Our Hoſte behelde well all about,
And ſawe this man was ſunne ibrent;
He knewe well by his ſingid ſnout,
And by his clothes, that were to rent,
He was a man wont walke about,
He n'as not aye in cloiſter pent,
Ne couthe religiouſliche lout,
And therefore was he full ill ſhent.
Our Hoſte him axed, What man art thou?
Sire Hoſte, (quod he) I am an hine,
For I am wont to go to plow,
And erne my mete yer that I dine:
To ſwette and ſwinke I make avowe,
My wife and babes therewith to finde,
And ſervin God and I wiſt how,
But we leude men yben full blinde:
For clerkes ſaie we ſhullin be fain
For ther livelod to ſwette and ſwinke,
And thei right nought us give again
Neither to ete ne yet to drinke;
Thei mowe by lawe, as that thei ſain,
Us curſe and dampne to hell'is brinke;
And thus thei puttin us to pain
With candlis queint and bell'is clinke.
Thei make us thrallis at ther luſt,
And ſain we mowe not els be ſaved;
Thei have the corne and we the duſt;
Who gainſayes them they ſaye he raved.
What, man! (quod our Hoſte) canſt thou preche?
Come nere and tel ſome holy thing.

.N'S TALE

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be Prologue

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ndleſe;
ıei ben untall;
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it befall.
ve I fought
theſe two,
as for nought
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ng tho,
ım befall.
ɔn the Pope's ſide,
e ſtature;
ı pride
d his lure;
n meſure
y gan he call;
ſharpe as fire,
: it befall.
n to preche
f mekeneſſe,
ſo gan us teche,
able gan bleſſe:

Prieſtis and [illegible]
Beth lowliche and of lowe degre,
And uſin none yerthly honours,
Ne croune ne curious covertours,
Ne pilloure ne othir proude pall,
Ne to cofrin up grete treſours,
For falſhed foule mote it befall.
Prieſtis ſhould for no cattill plede
But chaſtin 'hem in charite,
Ne to no battaile ſhould men lede
For inhaunſing ther owne degre,
Nat willin ſittinges in hie ſe,
No ſoverainte in hous ne hall,
Worldly worſhip defie and fle;
Who willeth highnes foule ſhall fal
Alas! who maie ſoche ſainctis ca

That willith to be kingis peres,
And higher than the Emperour,
And ſome that werin but pore freres
Now wollin waxe a warriour;
God ne is not ther governour
That holdith none his permagall,
While covc'tiſe is ther counſailour;
All ſoche falſhede mote nedis fall,
That hie on horſe willith to ride
In glitterande golde of grete araie,
Paintid and portrid all in pride,
No common knight maie go ſo gaie,
Chaunge of clothing evèry daie,
With goldin girdils grete and ſmall,
As boiſtous as is bere at baie;
All ſoche falſhed mote nedis fall.
With pride punifhith thei the pore,
And ſome one thei ſuſtain with ſale,
Of holie churche makith an hore,
And fill ther wombe with wine and ale;
With money fille thei many a male,
And chaffrin churchis when thei fall,
And telle the peple a leude tale;
Soche falſe faitours ſoule 'hem befall.
Thei fede of many manir metes,
With ſong and ſolaſsitting long,
And filleth ther wombe, and faſt fretes,
And from *the* mete unto the gong,

A staffe of golde, and pirrie lo!
As hevie as' it were made of ledde;
With clothe of gold bothe newe and redde,
With glitterande gold as grene as gall,
By dome thei dampne men to be dedde;
All soche faitours foule 'hem befall.
And Christ'is peple proudly curse
With brodè boke and braying bell,
And to put pennies in ther purse
Thei woll sell bothe hevin and hell:
In ther sentence and thou wilt dwell
Thei willin gesse in ther gaie hall,
And though the soth thou of 'hem tell
In the grete cursing shalt thou fall.
That is yblessid that thei blesse,
And cursid that thei cursin woll,
And thus the peple thei oppresse,
[illegible] lordshippis at full:

Lordis alſo mote to 'hem loute,
Jbeyſaunt to ther brode bleſſing,
Thei ridin with ther royal route
On a courſir as' it were a king,
With ſadle of golde glittering,
With curious harneis quaintly crallit,
Stireppis gaie of golde maſtling;
All ſuche falſhed foule may befal it.
Chriſtes Miniſters clepid thei bene,
And rulin al in robberie,
But Antichriſte thei ſervin clene,
Attisid al in tirannie,
Witneſſe of John his prophecie;
Antichriſte is ther admirall,
Tiffelers attired in trecherie;
Al ſuche faitours foule 'hem befall.
Who ſaith that ſome of 'hem may ſinne
He ſhal be domid to be ded;
Some of 'hem wollin gladly winne
Al ayenſt that whiche God forbed.
Al Holieſt they clepe ther hed,
That of ther rule is full regall;
Alas that evir thei ete bred!
For al ſuch falſhed wol foule fall.
Ther hed covitith al honour,
To be worſhipped in worde and dede,
Kingis mote to him knele and coure,
To the' apoſtles that Chriſt forbede:

To Popis hefte ſuch take more hede
Than to kepe Chriſtes commaundement,
Of gold and ſilvir ben ther wede,
Thei holde him hole omnipotent.
He ordaineth by his ordinaunce
To pariſhe prieſtis a powere,
To' anothir a gretir avaunce,
A gretir point to his miſtere;
But for he' is highiſt in erth here
To him reſerveth he many' a point,
But unto Chriſt. that hath no pere,
Reſervith he no pin no joynt.
So ſmith he abovin all,
And Chriſt abovin him nothinge,
Whan that he ſittith in his ſtall
Dampnith and ſavith as him thinke;
Suche pride tofore hie God doth ſtinke:
An angel had John to' him not knele,
Only to God do his bowinge;
Soche worſhip-willers mote ill fele.
Thei ne clepe Chriſt but *Sanctus Deus*,
And clepe ther hed *Sanctiſſimus*:
All they that ſuche a ſecte ſewis
I trowe thei taken 'hem amiſſe:
In erth here they havin ther bliſſe,
Ther hie maſtir is Beliall;
Chriſt his pore peple from 'hem wiſſe,
For al ſuche falſe will foule befall.

They mowin both ybinde and loſe,
And all is for ther holy life;
To ſave or dampne they mowen choſe;
Betwene 'hem now is a grete ſtrife;
Many' a man is killed with a knife
To wete which havin lordſhip ſhall;
For ſuche Chriſt ſuffrid woundis five,
For all ſuche falſhed will foule fall.
Chriſt ſaid, *Qui gladio percutit*
With ſwerdè ſurely he ſhall die;
He bad his prieſtis pece and grith,
And bad 'hem not drede for to die,
And bad them be both ſimple' and ſlie,
And carkè not for no cattell,
And truſte on God that ſitteth on hie,
For al falſe ſhal full foule befall.
Theſe wollin makè men to ſwere
Ayenſt Chriſt'is commaundèment,
And Chriſt'is members al to tere,
On rode as he were newe yrent;
Suche lawes thei maken by aſſent,
Eche on it throwith as a ball,
And thus the pore be fully ſhent,
But falſhed foule it ſhulle befall.
Ne uſin thei no ſimonie,
But ſelle churchis and priories,
Ne they uſin to none envie,
But curſin al 'hem contraries,

With purſe they p—
With purſe thei payin 'hem to plede,
And men of warre thei wollin wage
To bring ther enemies to dede,
And lordis livis they wol lede,
And muchil take, and give but ſmall,
But he' it ſo get from it ſhal ſhede,
And make ſuche falſe right foule yfall.
They halowe nothing but for hire,
Ne churche, ne font, ne veſtiment,
And make orders in every ſhire,
But prieſtis pay for the parchment:
Of riatours they taken rent,
Therwith they ſmere the ſhep'is ſkall,
For many churches ben ſuſpent;
— — falſhed foule it befall.

There was more mercy' in Maximine,
And Nero, that never was gode,
Than there is now in ſome of them
Whan he hath on his furrid hode;
They folowe Chriſt that ſhede his blode
To heven, as bucket to the wall;
Suche wrechis yben worſe than wode,
And al ſuche faitours foule 'hem fall.
They give ther almis to the riche,
To mainteynours and men of lawe,
For to lordis they wol be liche,
An harlottes ſonne not worth an hawe;
Sothfaſtneſſe allè ſuche han ſlawe;
They kembe ther crokettes with criſtall,
And drede of God they have doune drawe;
Al ſuche faitours foule 'hem befall.
They make perſons for the pennie,
And canons and their cardinals;
Unnethe amongſt 'hem al is any
That ne hath gloſed the goſpel fals,
For Chriſt made ner no cathedrals,
Ne with him was no cardinall
With a redde hatte, as uſe minſtrals;
But falſhed foule mote it befall.
Ther tithing and ther offring bothe
They clemith by poſſeſſion,
Therof n'il they none forgo,
Robbin men as a raunſome:

To harme the pepie [illegible]
To pardoners and falſe faitours
Thei ſell ther ſeles I dare well ſa
And all to holdin gret arraie,
To multiplie 'hem more metall,
They drede ful litel dom'is day,
Whan al ſuche falſhed ſhal foule
: Suche harlottes ſhul men diſc
For that they ſhullin make ther
And ben as proud as Alexander
And ſain to the pore Wo be ye
By yere eche prieſt ſhal paie hi
For to encreſe his lemmans cal
Suche herdis ſhul wel·ivil the,
And al ſuche falſe ſhal foule be
And if a man be falſely fam

Though he be giltie of the dede,
And that he may the money paie,
Al the while his purſe wol yblede
He may uſe it fro day to day.
The biſhopes officers gone gay,
And this game they uſe ovir all,
The pore to pil is al their pray;
But al ſuche falſe ſhul foule befall.
Alas! God ordained no ſuche lawe,
Ne no ſuche crafte of covetiſe,
But he forbad it by his lawe;
Suche rulers mowen of God agriſe,
For al his rulisben rightwiſe:
Theſe newe pointis ben pure papall,
And Godd'is lawe they all diſpice,
And al ſuche faitours ſhul foule fall.
They ſaine that Peter had the key
Of heven and hel, to have and holde;
I trowe Peter toke no money
For no ſinnis that he yſolde:
Suche ſucceſſours yben to bokle,
In winning all ther witte they wral,
Ther conſcience is waxin colde,
And al ſuche faitours foul 'hem fal.
Peter was ner ſo grete a fole
To leve his key with ſuche a lorell,
Or take ſuche curſid ſoc or tole,
He was adviſid nothing well;

I trowe they have the key of hell,
Their maiſtir is of that marſhall,
For there thei dreſſin 'hem to dwell,
And with falſe Lucifer to fall.
Thei ben as proude as Lucifarre,
As angry and as envious;
From a gode faith they ben ful farre;
In cove'tiſe they ben curious;
To catche catil as covitous
As hounde that for hungre wol yall,
Ungodly and ungracious;
And nedely ſuche falſe ſhal foule fall.
The Pope, and he were Peter's heir
Me thinke he errith in this caſe,
Whan choiſe of biſhop's in diſpaire
To choſin 'hem in divers place,
A lorde ſhal write to him for grace,
For his clerke anone pray he ſhall,
So ſhal he ſpedin his purchaſe;
And al ſuche falſe foule 'hem befall.
Although he can ne manir gode
A lord'is prayir ſhal be ſpedde,
Though he be wilde of wil or wode,
Nat underſtanding what men redde,
A leude boſtir, that God forbedde,
As gode a biſhoppe' is my horſe ball;
Suche a Pope is full foule beſtedde,
And at the laſte wol foule yfall.

akith prieſtes for erthly thanke,
: at all for Chriſt'is ſake;
iat yben ful fat and ranke,
is hele none hede they take;
:l done what er they make,
r ſhal anſwere ones for all;
ld'is thank ſuch worch and wake,
uche falſe ſhal foule befall.
: that can nat yſay ther crede
ayir ſhul be made prelates,
:anne thei the goſpell rede,
iul now woldin hie eſtates;
godes frendſhip 'hem makes,
ith on ther ſumme totall;
:re the keyes of hell'is yates,
ſuche falſe ſhal foule befall.
forſakin for Chriſt'is love
:, and hungre, thurſte, and colde;
n ordrid or al above
outhed til they ben olde;
dore they go nat to the folde,
e ther ſhepe they nought traval,
l men al ſuche I holde,
uche falſe foule 'hem befall.
hriſt our King thei wol forſake,
owe him nought for his poverte,
iſt'is love they wol awake,
nke *piement* ale apette:

Nowe ſay they There may be but one
That may not erre in no manere,
Who leve not this ben loſt echone:
Peter errid, ſo did not John;
Why is he cleped the Principall?
Chriſte cleped him Peter, not the St(
Al falſe faitours foule 'hem befal.
Why curſin they the croiſery
Chriſt'is Chriſtian creturis?
For bytwene them is now envy
To be enhaunſid in honours;
Chriſtin livers with ther labours,
For they levin on no mortal,
Ben do to deth with diſhonours,
And al ſuche falſe foule 'hem befal.

A king ſhal knele and kiſſe his ſhowe,
Chriſt let a ſinful kiſſe his fete,
Me thinke he holdeth him hie inowe,
So Lucifer did, that hie ſet:
Suche one me thinke himſelfe foryet,
Or to the trouth he was nat cal:
Chriſte that ſuffirid woundis wete,
Shall make all ſuche falſhed foule fall.
They layith out ther largè nettes
For to takin ſilvir and golde,
Thei fillin coffers, and ſackes fettes
There as they ſoulis catchin ſholde;
Ther ſervauntes be to them unholde,
But they can doublin ther rentall;
To bigge 'hem caſtles bigge 'hem holde;
And al ſuche falſe foule 'hem befall.

Here endeth the firſt parte of this Tale, and hereafter foloweth the ſeconde parte.

To accorde what this wordè fall
No more Engliſhe ne can I finde,
Shewin anothir nowe I ſhall,
For I have moche to ſaye behinde,
How prieſtis han the peple pinde,
As curteis Chriſte yhath me kinde,
And put this matter in my minde,
To make this manir men amende.

And untruely of the gospe[illegible]
For his mercy God it amende!
What els is Antichriste to saie
But even Christ'is adversarie?
Suche hath now ben many a daie
To Christ'is bidding ful contrarie,
That from the trouthè clene ywarry;
Out of the way they ben ywende,
And Christ'is peple' untruely cary;
God for his pitie it amende!
They live contrary to Christes life,
In hie pride against mekènesse,
Against suffraunce they usin strife,
And angre ayenst sobrenesse,
Ayenist wisedom wilfulnesse;
[illegible] litil tende,

And ayeniſt almeſſe envy;
Ayeniſt Chriſt they comprehende,
For chaſtite mainteine leche'ry;
God for his gracè this amende!
Againſt penaunce thei uſe delightes,
Ayenſt ſuffraunce ſtrong defence,
Ayenſt God they uſin ill rightes,
Ayeniſt pitie puniſhmentes,
Open' evil ayenſt continence;
Ther wickid winning worſe diſpende,
Sobirneſſe ſette in to diſpence;
God for his godeneſſe it amende!
Why cleimin they holy' his powere,
And wranglin ayenſt al his heſtes?
His living folowe thei nought here,
But livin worſe than witleſſe beſtes:
Of fiſhe and fleſhe they lovin feſtes;
As lordis thei ben brode ikende;
Of Godd'is pore thei hatin geſtes;
God for his mercy this amende!
With Dives ſuche ſhal have ther dome,
That faine that they be Chri't'is frendes,
And do nothing as they ſhould done,
Al ſuche ben falſir than ben fendes:
On the peple they ley ſuche bendes
As God in erth they han offende;
Succour for ſuch Chriſte now ſend us,
And for his mercy *this* amende!

Goddes word to al folke for to ...
And ſinful man for to amende.
Chriſt ſent the porè for to preche,
The royal riche he did not ſo,
Now dare no pore the peple teche,
For Antichriſt is al ther foe;
Among the peple he mote go,
He hath biddin al ſuche ſuſpende,
Some hath he hent, and thinketh yet mo;
But al this God may wel amende.
Al tho that han the worlde forſake,
And livin lowly, as God badde,
Into ther priſon ſhulle be take,
Betin and boundin, and forth ladde:
Hereof I rede no man be dradde,
... ſhould be yſhende;

Yet Peter had but one of tho,
And Chriſt to him ſmite gan defende,
And into the' ſheth badde put it tho;
And al ſuche miſcheves God amende!
  Chriſt bad Peter to kepe his ſhepe,
And with his ſworde forbade' hem ſmite;
Swerde is no tole with ſhepe to kepe,
But to ſhepherdes that ſhepe wol bite;
Me thinke ſuche ſhepherdes ben to wite
Who'ayen ther ſhepe with ſwerde contende;
They drive ther ſhepe with grete diſpite;
But al this God may well amende.
  Peter's ſucceſſoures be thei nought
Whom Chriſt ymade his chefe paſtoure;
A ſwerde no ſhepherde uſin ought
But he would ſle as a bochoure:
Who ſo were Peter's ſucceſſoure
Should bere his ſhepe til his backe bende,
And ſhadowe 'hem from every ſhoure;
And al this God may wel amende.
  Succeſſours to Peter hen theſe
In that, that Peter Chriſte forſoke,
That levir had God's love to leſe
Than ſhepherde had to leſe his hoke;
He culleth the ſhepe as doth the coke;
Of 'hem takin they woll untrende,
And falſely gloſe the Goſpell boke;
God for his mercy them amende!

For world is wele ...
Peter's ſucceſſours they ben than;
But al ſuche God may wel amende.
For Sathan is to ſay no more
But he that contrary to Chriſt is,
In this they lernin Peter's lore,
They ſewin him whan he did miſſe;
They folowe him forſoth in this
That Chriſt would Peter reprehende,
But nat that longith to' hevin bliſſe;
God for his mercy 'hem amende!
Thei none apoſtle ſewen, in caſe
Of ought that I can underſtonde,
But him that betraied Chriſt, Judas,
That bare the purſe in every londe,
And al that he might ſette on honde

ſikre' of the fele enſiſe.
ſothneſſe they ben yfrende,
:tiſe chaunge with quentiſe;
y God al ſuche amende!
Chriſt upon erth, here eſte ſone,
ouldin dampnè him to die;
eſtis they han fordone,
ie his ſawes ben hereſie;
iis commaundementes they crie,
apnin all his to be brende,
ne like ſuche loſengrie;
nighty all ſuche amende!
han more might in Englande here
.th the king and all his lawe,
.n purchaſid ſuche powere
ı 'hem whom liſt not knawe,
that hereſie' is ther ſawe,
o priſon wol 'hem ſende;
ot ſo by eldir dawe;
his mercy it amende!
king'is lawe wol no man deme
che withoutin anſwere,
ny man theſe miſqueme
be baſghtid as a bere,
wel worſe they wol him tere,
priſon wollin him pende
, and in othir gere;
hat God woll it may amende.

The king ne taxith nat his men
But by aſſent of the commi'nalte,
But theſe eche yere wol raunſom 'hem
Maiſtirfully, more than dothe he:
Ther ſelis by yere bettir be
Than is the king'is in extende,
Ther officers han gretir fe;
But alle this miſchefe God amende!
Who ſo wol prove a teſtament
That is nat al worth tennè pounde,
He ſhal paye for the parchèment
The thirde of the money all rounde;
Thus the pore peple is ranſounde,
They ſay ſuche parte t'em ſhould apende,
There as they gripen' it goeth to grounde;
God for his mercy it amende!
A ſimple fornication
Twenty ſhillingis he ſhall pay,
And than have abſolucion
And al the yere uſe it he may:
Thus thei lettin 'hem go aſtray;
Thei recke nat though the ſoule be brende;
Theſe kepin evill Peter's kay;
And al ſuche ſhepherdes God amende!
Wondir is that the parliamente,
And al the lordis of this londe,
Here to takin ſo lite entente
To helpe the peple' out of ther honde,

For thei ben hardir in ther bonde,
Worſe bete, and cruellir ybrende,
Than to the king is underſtand;
God him helpe this for to amende!
What biſhoppes, what religions,
Han in this lande as muche lay ſe,
Lordeſhippis and poſſeſſions,
More than lordis it ſemith me;
That makith 'hem leſe charite:
They mowin not to God attende,
In erth thei have ſo highe degre;
God for his mercy it amende!
The Empe'rour yafe the Pope ſo
So highè lordeſhip him about,
That at the laſt the ſely kime
The proudè Pope yput him out,
So of this relme is in grete dout;
But, Lordes, beware, and them del
For nowe theſe folke be wondir ſto
The king and lords now this amen

Thus endeth the ſeconde parte of this
foloweth the thirde.

Moyses lawe forbode it tho
That preſtis ſhould no lordſhippes
Chriſt'is goſpell biddith alſo
That they ſhould no lordſhippis hel
Chriſtes apoſtels were ner ſo bolde,
No ſuche *lordſhippes* to 'hem enbr

Ther gretenesse maketh ...
And take his mekenesse in dispite;
And thei were pore and had but lite
Thei n'old nat demen' aftir the fac
Norishe ther shepe, and 'hem nat b
May God amende 'hem for his gra

Griffon.

What canst thou preche ayenst
That men yclepin Seculere?

Pellican.

Thei ben curates of many toun
On yerth they havin grete power
They have grete prebendis and d
Some two or thre, and some hav
A parsonage to ben playing fere,
... thei serve the king also,

i gedering procuratour,
oré peple enplede,
n as à ravinour,
e the mony lede,
juicke and eke of dede,
i and his lorde eke,
he pore give gode rede
nge, of hole and ficke.
ey purchaſe 'hem lay fe
as 'hem likith beſt,
ode as a cite
and in the weſt;
ius they ben ful preſt,
e they woll nought ſpende,
re to Godd'is geſt,
ſome that all hath fende.
vice ſoche wollin live,
othir to treſure;
er pariſhe die unſhrive
givin a roſe floure;
d be as a mirrour
nd leude alſo,
folke ther lele labour;
nen ben all miſgo.
m yben full harde nigges,
hem ben proude and gaie,
ther gode upon gigges,
em of grete araie.

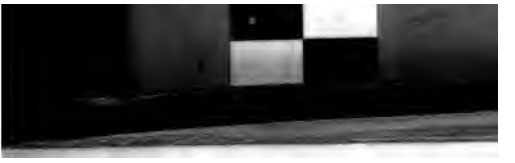
'Though that the pore for hungir die,
O penie' on 'hem will thei not ſpende:
Have thei receiving of the rente
Thei recke ner of the remènaunt;
Alas! the devill hath clene 'hem blente;
Soche one is Sathanes ſojournaunt.
And uſe horedome and harlottrie,
And covetiſe, and pompe, and pride,
And ſlothe, and wrathe, and eke envie,
And ſewin ſinne by every ſide;
Alas! where thinkin ſoche t' abide?
How woll thei ther accomptis yeld?
From hie God thei mowe 'hem not hide
Soche willers witte' is not worth a neld
Thei ben ſo rotid in richeſſe

They have a gedering procuratour,
That can the pore peple emplede,
And robbe 'hem as a ravinour,
And to his lorde the mony lede,
And catche of quicke and eke of dede,
And richin him and his lorde eke,
And to robbe the pore give gode rede
Of olde and yonge, of hole and ficke.
Therwith they purchaſe 'hem lay ſe
In londe, there as 'hem likith beſt,
And buildin brode as a cite
Both in the eſt and in the weſt;
To purchaſe thus they ben ful preſt,
But on the pore they woll nought ſpende,
Ne no gode give to Godd'is geſt,
Ne ſende him ſome that all hath ſende.
By ther ſervice ſoche wollin live,
And truſt that othir to treſure;
Though all ther pariſhe die unthrive
Thei woll not givin a roſe floure;
Ther life ſhould be as a mirrour
Both to lerid and leude alſo,
And teche the folke ther lele labour;
Suche miſter men ben all miſgo.
Some of 'hem yben full harde nigges,
And ſome of 'hem ben proude and gaie,
Some ſpendin ther gode upon gigges,
And findin 'hem of grete araie.

Ayenſt Chriſt ...
And amende 'hem ner ne will,
But ſerve Sathan by one aſſent.
Who ſayith ſothe he ſhall be ſhent,
Or ſpeketh ayenſt ther falſe living,
Who ſo well livith ſhall be brent,
For ſoche ben gretir than the king.
Popis, biſhops, and cardinals,
Chanons, and parſons, and vicare,
In Goddes ſervice I trowe ben fals
That ſacramentis ſellin here,
And ben as proude as Lucifere:
Eche man loke whethir that I lie;
Who ſo ſpekith ayenſt ther powere
It ſhall be holdin herefie.
... ɔbith how many orders take

ow many emong hem all
not this hiè waie
ichrift thei ſhullin fall,
hei wollin God betraie:
ıde 'hem, that beſt ymaie!
men thei makin ſhende;
n well the ſothe I ſaie,
:vill hath foule 'hem blende.
f 'hem on ther churchis dwell
ed porely; proude of porte;
ſacramentes thei doen ſell;
:atching' is ther comfort:
ıattir thei wollin mell;
hem wrong is ther diſport;
the peple thei ben fell,
'hem lower than doeth the lorde.
r the tithing of a ducke,
pple or an aie,
e men ſwere upon a boke;
:hei foulin Chriſt'is faie:
in evill hevin kaie;
/in aſſoile, thei mowe ſhrive,
ınis wivis ſtrongly plaie,
true tillers ſturte and ſtrive,
wreſtling and at the wake,
:hief chauntours at the nale,
eters, and medling make,
and houtin with heve and hale;

That [illegible]
Ayenſt Chriſt'is commaundèment,
And amende 'hem ner ne will,
But ſerve Sathan by one aſſent.
Who ſayith ſothe he ſhall be ſhent,
Or ſpeketh ayenſt ther falſe living,
Who ſo well livith ſhall be brent,
For ſoche ben gretir than the king.
Popis, biſhops, and cardinals,
Chanons, and parſons, and vicare,
In Goddes ſervice I trowe ben fals
That ſacramentis fellin here,
And ben as proude as Luciſere:
Eche man loke whethir that I lie;
Who ſo ſpekith ayenſt ther powere
It ſhall be holdin herefie.
[illegible]



Loke how many emong hem all
Ne holdin not this hiè waie
With Antichriſt thei ſhullin fall,
For that thei wollin God betraie:
God amende 'hem, that beſt ymaie!
For many men thei makin ſhende;
Thei wetin well the ſothe I ſaie,
But the devill hath foule 'hem blende.
Some of 'hem on ther churchis dwell
Apparailled porely; proude of porte;
The ſeven ſacramentes thei doen ſell;
In cattell catching' is ther comfort:
Of eche mattir thei wollin mell;
To doen 'hem wrong is ther diſport;
To' afraie the peple thei ben fell,
And hold 'hem lower than doeth the lorde.
And for the tithing of a ducke,
Or of an apple or an aie,
Thei make men ſwere upon a boke;
Lo! thus thei foulin Chriſt'is faie:
Soche berin evill hevin kaie;
Thei mowin aſſoile, thei mowe ſhrive,
With mennis wivis ſtrongly plaie,
And with true tillers ſturte and ſtrive,
At the wreſtling and at the wake,
And the chief chauntours at the nale,
Market beters, and medling make,
Hoppen' and houtin with heve and hale;

The seven [illegible]
Kepe soche the kaies of he[illegible]
Mennis wivis thei wollin hold,
And though that thei ben right sory,
To speke thei shull not be so bold,
For sompning to' the consistory,
And make 'hem saie with mouthe t lie;
'Though thei it sawin with ther eye
Hir lemman holdin opinly
No man so harde to aske why.
He woll have tithing and offring
Maugre whosoevir it grutche,
And twise on the daie he woll sing:
Godd'is priestis ne were none soche;
He mote go hunte with dogge and biche
[illegible] blowen his horne and cryin Hey,
[illegible] as a witche;

That it the leude peple ſe mowe,
Thou Mary, thou worcheſt wondir thinges,
About that that men offrin to
Hongin brochis, ouchis, and ringes;
The prieſt purchaſith the offringes,
But he n'ill offir to' none image:
Wo is the ſoule that he forſinges
That prechith for ſoche pilgrimage!
To men and women that ben pore,
Which that ben Chriſt'is owne likeneſſe,
Men ſhullin offir at ther dore,
That ſuffre hungir and diſtreſſe,
And to ſoche image offir leſſe,
That mowe not fele ne thirſte ne cold;
The pore in ſpirite gan Chriſt bleſſe,
Therfore offrith to feble' and old.
Buckilers brode and ſwerdis long,
Baudrike, with baſelardis kene,
Soche toles about ther necke thei hong:
With Antichriſt ſoche prieſtis ben;
Upon ther dedes it is well ſene
Whom thei ſervin, whom thei honouren;
Antichriſt'is thei ben all clene,
And Godd'is godes falſly devouren.
Of ſcarlet and grene gaie gounes,
That mote be ſhapin for the newe,
To chippin and kiſſin in tounes
The damoſeles that to the daunce ſewe,

Now ben the prieſtis power to wide
Men muſt enlarge the veſtiment,
The holy goſpell thei doen hide
For the contrarien in raiment;
Soche prieſtes of Lucifer ben ſent:
Like conquerours thei ben araied,
The proude pendauntes at ther ars pent,
Falſely the trueth thei han betraied.
Shrift ſilvir ſoche wollin aſkeis,
And wollin men crepe to the crouche;
None of the ſacramentes ſave aſkis
Withoutin mede ſhall no man touche;
On ther biſhop ther warant vouche,
That is a lawe of the decre:
With mede and money thus thei mouche,
And thus thei ſain is charite.

Or thei yef the biſhoppis why,
Or thei mote ben in his ſervice,
And holdin forth ther harlottrie,
Soche prelates ben of feble' empriſe;
Of Godd'is grame ſoche men agriſe,
For ſoche mattirs that takin mode,
How thei' excuſe 'hem, and in what wiſe,
Methinkith thei ought gretely drede.
Thei ſain that it to no man longeth
To reprove them though that thei erre,
But falſly Godd'is godes thei fongeth,
And therwith maintein wo and werre;
Ther dedes ſhould be as bright as ſterre,
Ther living leudè mann'is light:
Thei ſaie The Pope ne maie not erre;
Nede muſt that paſſin mann'is might.
Though' a prieſt lie with his lemman' al night,
And tellen his felowe and he him,
He goith to maſſe anon right,
And ſaieth he ſingeth out of ſinne;
His birde abideth him at his inne,
And dighteth his diner the mene while,
He ſingeth his maſſe for he would winne,
And ſo he wenith God begile.
'Hem thinkith long till thei be met,
And that thei uſe forth all the yere;
Emong the folke whan he is ſet
He holdith *no* man half his pere:

And ſaied, Of monkis canſt thou ought?
The Pelli'can ſaid, Thei ben full grete,
And in this world moche wo hath wrought;
Sainct Benet, that ther ordir brought,
Ne made 'hem ner in ſoche manere,
I trowe it came ner in his thought
That thei ſhould uſe ſo grete powere.
That a man ſhould a monke Lorde call,
Ne ſerve him on knees as a king;
He is as proude as prince in pall,
In mete and drinke, and in all thing:
Some weren a miter and ring,
With double worſtid well idight,
With roiall mete and richè drinke,
And ride on courſer as a knight.

Now thei ben queint and curious,
With fine clothe clad and ſervid clene,
Proude, and angrie, and envious,
Malice is mochil that thei mene;
In catching craftie and covetous,
Lordly livin in grete liking;
This living' is not religious
According to Benet's living.
Thei ben clerkes, and courts ovir ſe,
Ther pore tenaunce fully thei flite;
The hier a man amercid be
The gladlyir thei woll it write:
This is farre from Chriſtes poverte,
For all with cove'tiſe thei endite;
On the pore thei have no pite,
Ne ner 'hem cheriſhe but or bite.
And comminly ſoche ben comen
Of pore peple', and of 'hem begete,
That this perfection han inomen:
Ther fathirs ride but on ther fete,
And travaile ſore for that thei ete,
In povert livith yong and old;
Ther fathirs ſuffreth drought and wete,
Many hungrie meles, thurſte, and cold.
And all this the monkes han forſake
For Chriſt'is love and Sainct Bencte,
To pride and eſe have 'hem betake;
This religion is ill beſete:

And take ...
Full fewe for God wol monkes ...
Lite is ſoche ordir for to praiſe;
Sain& Benet ordained it not ſo,
But bad 'hem to be cherèliche,
In churliche manir live and go,
Boiſtous in yerth, and not lordliche.
Thei diſclaunderin Sain& Benet,
Therfore thei have his holy curſe;
Sain& Benet with 'hem nevir met
But if thei thought to robbe his purſ
I can no more here of 'hem tell
But that thei ben like tho before,
And clene ſerve the devill of hell,
And ben his treſure and his flore;
And all ſoche othir counterfaito

As Goddes godenes no man tell might,
Ne write ne ſpeke, ne thinke in thought,
So ther falſhed and ther unright
Maie no man tell that ere God wrought.
The Griffon ſaied, Thou canſt no gode,
Thou came ner of no gentill kinde;
Othir I trowe thou waxiſt wode
Or ellis thou haſt loſte thy minde.
Should holy churche yhave no hedde
Who ſhould ybe her governaile,
Who ſhould her rule, who ſhould her redde,
Who ſhould her forthren, who availe?
Eche man ſhall live by his travaile;
Who beſt doith ſhall have moſt mede:
With ſtrength if men the churche aſſaile
With ſtrength men muſt defende her nede.
And if the Pope were purely pore
And nedy, and nothing ne had,
He ſhuld be drive from dore to dore;
The wickid of him n'olde not drad:
Of ſoche an hedde men would be ſade,
And ſinfully liven' as 'hem luſt;
With ſtrength amendis ſoche be made,
With wepin wolves from ſhepe be wuſt.
If that the Pope and prelates would
So begge and bid, bowe and borowe,
Holy churche ſhould yſtande full cold,
Her ſervauntes ſit and ſoupe ſorowe;

Shouldin be honeste in all thing,
And worſhipfull God's workis werche;
So ſemeth it to ſerve Chriſt ther king
In honeſt and in clene clothing,
With veſſels of gold and clothes riche
To God honeſtly to' make offring,
For to his lordſhip none is liche.
The Pellican caſt an houge crie,
And ſaied, Alas! why ſaieſt thou ſo?
Chriſt is our hedde that ſitteth on hie,
Heddis ne ought we have no mo;
We ben his membres bothe alſo,
Fathir he taught us call him als,
Maiſters to call forbad he tho;
All maiſters ben wickid and fals
That takith maiſtrie in his name

Her riche clothes ſhall be rightwiſneſſe,
Her trefure a true life ſhall be,
Charite ſhall be ther richeſſe,
Ther lordſhip ſhall be unite,
And hope in God ther honeſte,
Ther veſſell a clene conſcience;
Pore in ſprite, and humilite,
Shall be holy church'is defence.
What! ſaied the Griffon, maie the greve
That othir folkis faren wele?
What haſt thou to doin with ther live?
Thy falſhed every man maie fele,
For thou ne canſt no cattell gete,
But liveſt in londe as a lorell,
With gloſing gettiſt thou thy mete;
So farith the devil in hell.
He would that eche man there ſhould dwell,
For he livith in clene envie,
So with the tales that thou doeſt tell
Thou wouldeſt othir peple deſtrie
With your gloſe and your hereſie,
For ye can live no bettir life
But clene in fals hypocriſie,
And bringiſt the in wo and ſtrife.
And therwith have ye not to doen,
For ye ne havin here no cure;
Ye ſerve the devill, not God ne man,
And he ſhall payin you your hire;

Te ſpeke ayein as ye were lie,
Tithings, offringes, with your entente
And on your Lord'is body lie:
All this ye doen to live in eſe,
As who ſayith Ther ben none ſoche,
And ſain The Pope' is not worth a pe
To make the peple' ayen him groche.
And this ycommith in by fendes
To bring the Chriſtin in diſtaunce,
For thei would that no man were fren
Levith thy chattring with miſchaunce
If thou live well what wilt thou more?
Let othir men live as 'hem liſt,
Spendin ther gode or kepe in ſtore;
Othir mennes conſcience ner thou n'iſt
Ye han no cure to anſwere fore:

But I diſpiſe ther hiè pride,
Ther welthe that ſhould be pore in ſprite;
Ther wickidneſſe is knowe ſo wide,
Thei ſervin God in falſe habite,
And tournin mekeneſſe into pride,
And lowlineſſe into' hie degre,
And Godd'is wordis tourne and hide,
And I am moved by charite
To lettin men to livin ſo
With all my conning and my might,
And to warnin men of ther wo,
And to tellin 'hem trouth and right.
The ſacramentes be foul'is hele
If thei ben uſid in gode uſe;
Ayenſt that ſpeke I ner a dele,
For than ne were I nothing wiſe;
But thei that uſe 'hem in miſſe manere,
Or ſet 'hem up to any ſale,
I trowe thei ſhall abie 'hem dere;
This is my reſon, this my tale:
Who ſo taketh 'hem unrightfulliche
Ayenſt the ten commaundèmentes,
Or elles by gloſe wrechidliche
Selleth any of the ſacramentes,
I trowe thei doe the devill homage,
In that thei wetin thei doe wrong,
And therto I dare well to wage
Thei ſerve Sathan for all ther ſong.

Ne takè ne give for covetiſe,
And it be ſo taken' it is nought;
Who ſelleth him ſo maie ſore agriſ
On our Lordes body' I doe not lie,
I ſaie the ſothe thorough true rede,
His fleſhe and blode, through his n
Is there all in the formé of brede.
How it is there it nedeth not ſtri
Whethre' it be ſubget or accident,
But as Chriſt was whan he' was on
So is he there in verament.
If Pope or cardi'nall live gode live,
As Chriſt us bad in his goſpell,
Ayenſt that ne woll I not ſtrive,
But me thinkith thei live not well.

Ye ſhulle be hangid and to drawe:
Who givith you leve for to preche,
Or ſpekin againſt Godd'is lawe,
And the peple thus falſely teche?
Thou ſhalt be curſed with boke and bell,
And diſſevered from holie churche,
And clene idampnid into hell,
Othirwiſe but ye wollin worche.
The Pelli'can ſaied, That I ne drede;
Your curſing is of lite value;
Of God I hope to have my mede,
For it is falſhed that ye ſhewe,
For ye ben out of charite,
And wilne vengeaunce, as did Nero:
To ſuffrin I woll redy be;
I drede not all that thou canſt do.
Chriſt bad ones ſuffre for his love,
And ſo he taught all his ſervauntes,
But thou' amende for his ſake above;
I drede not all thy maintenaunce;
For if I drede the world'is hate
Me thinkith I were lite to praiſe:
I drede nothing your hie eſtate,
Ne I ne drede not your diſeſe.
Wollin ye tourne and leve your pride,
And your hie porte and your richeſſe,
Your curſing ſhould not go ſo wide;
God bring you into rightwiſeneſſe!

For I drede not your tirannie,
For nothing that ye can ydoen;
To ſuffre I am all redie,
Sikir I recke nevir how ſone.
The Griffon grinned as he were wode,
And lokid lovely as an owle,
And ſwore by cock'is herte and blode
He wold him tere every doule;
Holy churche thou diſclaundriſt foule;
For thy ſpeche I woll the to race,
And make thy fleſhe to rote and moule;
Loſell, thou ſhalt have hardè grace.
The Griffon flewe forth on his waie,
The Pellican did ſit and wepe,
And to himſelf he gan to ſaie,
God would that any of Chriſtes ſhepe
Had herdin, and itaken kepe
Eche a word that here ſayid was,
And would it write and well ikepe;
God would it were all for his grace!

Plowman.

I anſwerid, and ſaied I would,
If for my travaile one would pey.

Pellican.

He ſaied yes; theſe ther God han ſold,
For thei han grete ſtore of money.

Plowman.

I ſayid, Tell me and thou maie,
Why telliſt thou menn'is treſpace?

Pellican.

He ſaid, To' amende 'hem in gode fay,
If God woll give me any grace;
For Chriſt himſelf is liken to me,
That for his peple died on rode;
As fare I right ſo farith he,
He fedith his birdes with his blode:
But theſe doen evill ayenſt Gode,
And ben his foen undir frendes face;
I told 'hem how ther living ſtode,
And God amende 'hem for his grace!

Plowman.

What ailith the Griffon, tell why
That he holdith on the' othir ſide,
For thei two yben likily
And with kindis yrobin wide.

Pellican.

The foulè betokinith pride,
As Lucifer that high flewe was,
And ſith he did him in ill hide,
For he agiltid Godd'is grace.
As birde flyith up in the aire,
And livith by birdes that ben meke,
So theſe ben flowe up in diſpaire,
And ſhendin ſely ſoulis eke;
The ſoulis that ben in ſinnes eke
He culleth 'hem; knele therfore, alas!
For bribrie *Godd'is forbode breke*;
But God amende it for his grace!

The hinder parte is a lieon,
A robber and a raviner,
That robbeth the peple in yerth doune,
And in yerth holdith none his pere:
So fareth this foule both ferre and nere,
With tempo'rel ſtrength the peple chaſe
As a lion proude in yerth here;
May God amende 'hem for his grace!

Pellican.

He flewe forth with his wingis twain
All drouping, and daſid, and dull,
But ſone the Griffon came again,
Of his foulis the yerth was full;
The Pelli'can he had caſt to pull,
So grete nombre ner ſene there was,
What manir of foules telle I woll,
If God wol give me of his grace.

With the Griffon come foulis fele,
Ravins, rokis, crowis, and pie,
And graie foulis, agadrid wele,
Igurde above they wouldin hie,
Gledis and boſardes weren 'hem by,
White molles and puttockes toke ther place,
And lapwinges, that wel conith lie;
This company' han forlete ther grace.

Long while the Pellican was oute,
But at laſt he commith againe,
And brought with him the phenix ſtoute;
The Griffon would have ſlow ful faine,

lle flewen as thicke as raine,
enix tho began 'hem chace,
from him it was in vaine,
lid vengeaunce and no grace.
ewe 'hem doune without mercy;
:ſtarte neither ſre ne thrall;
. they caſt a rufull crie
hat the Griffon doun was fall;
: him not, but ſlewe 'hem all:
he 'hem drove no man may trace:
:he erth me thought they yall;
ıey had a feble grace!
Pellican then axid right
writing if I have blame
.en wol for me fight of flight?
ullin ſheldè me from ſhame?
: yhad a maide to dame,
e Lambè that ſlaine ywas,
:ldin me from goſtly blame,
hely harme is Godd'is grace.
fore I pray every man
writing have me excuſed,
riting writeth the Pellican,
ıus theſe peple hath diſpiſed;
n freſhe fully adviſed
ot mainteine his menace,
devill is ofte diſguiſed
ıg a man to evil grace.

Witith the Pelli'can and not me,
For herof I n'il not avowe
In hie ne lowe, ne no degre,
But as fable take it ye mowe.
To holy churche I will me bowe;
Eche man to' amende him Chriſte ſende ſpace!
And for my writing me alowe
He that' is almighty for his grace.

Here endeth The Plowman's Tale.

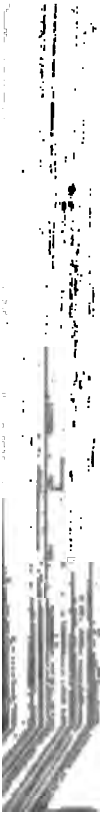
THE PROLOGUE;

Or, The mery adventure of the Pardonere and Tapſtere the inn at Canterbury.

When all this freſh feleſhip were come to Cantirbui
As ye have herde to fore, with Talys glad and merr

The Prologue] This Prologue and the Tale (Hiſtory of Ber
which follows it were never before printed, and are taken c
of a mſ. borrowed from the Honourable Lady Thinn's, and r
to be met with in any of the other mſſ. which Mr. Urry had p
uſed; ſo that if the ſenſe and meaſure of the verſe are not ſo p
fect here as in the other Tales it muſt be attributed to the wa
of mſ. upon the authority of which all the other correctic
are chiefly grounded. The verſe in all probability is of the ſar
kind with that of Gamelyn, and were it to be found in as ma
mſſ. might no doubt be as eaſily compleated, but having
other beſides the forementioned, the reader muſt be conte
with only a faithfull tranſcript of it out of that mſ. *Urry.*

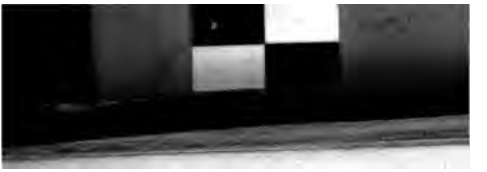
Som of ſotill ſentence of vertue and of lore,
And ſom of othir mirthis, for them that hold no ſtore
Of wiſdom, ne of holynes, ne of chivalry,
Nethir of vertuouſe matere, but to foly
Leyd wit and luſtis all to ſuch japis
As hurlewaynes meyne in every hegg that rapes
Thorough unſtabill mynde, ryght as the levis grene
Stondewn ageyn the wedir, ryght ſo by them I mene:
But no more hereof nowe at this ilche tyme,
In ſaving of my ſentence, my Prolog, and my ryme.
They toke their in, and loggit them at mydmorowe I trowe,
Alle cheker of the hope that many a man doth knowe;
Their Hooſt of Southworke, that with them went, as ye have herde ſo fore,
That was rewler of them al, of las and eke of more,
Ordeyned their dyner wifely or they to chirch went,
Such vitaillis as he fonde in town, and for noon othir ſent.
The Pardonere behelde the beſynes, how ſtatis wer iſervid,
Diſkennyng hym al prively, and a ſyde ſwervid:
The hoſtelere was ſo halowid fro o plaſe to another
He toke his ſtaffe to the Tapſtere: Welcom myne own brother,
Quod ſhe, with a frendly loke, al redy for to kys;
And he, as a man ilerned of ſuch kyndnes,
Bracyd hir by the myddyll, and made hir gladly chere,
As though he had iknowen hir al the rathir yeer:



She halid hym into the tapſtrye there hir b
Lo, here I ligg, (quod ſhe) myſelf al ny
Without manny's company ſyn my lov
Jenkyn Harpour, yf ye hym knewe: fr
Was not a luſtier perſone to daunce ne to
Then he was, thoughe I it ſey: and the
She made, and with hir napron feir and
She wypid ſoft hir eyen for teris that ſh
As grete as any mylſtone: upward gon
For love of her ſwetyng, that ſat ſo nig
She wept and waylid, and wrong her hon
much to done,
For they that loven ſo paſſyngly ſuch
have echon:
She ſnyſſith, ſighith, and ſhoke hire he
rouful cher:
Benedicite! quod the Pardonere, and to
ſwere,
Yee make ſorowe inowgh, quod he, yo
ye ſhuld leſe.
It is no wondir, quod ſhe than; and the
to ſneſe.
Aha! al hole, quod the Pardoner; your
ſomewhat paſſid.
God forbede it els! quod ſhe, but it w
I myght nat lyve els, thowe wotiſt, and
endure:
Now bleſſid be God of mendemente of
of cure!

Quod the Pardoner tho anoon, and toke hir by the chynne,
And ſayd to hir theſe wordis tho; Alas that love is ſyn!
So kynd a lover as yee be oon, and ſo trew of herte,
For be my trewe conſcience yit for yewe I ſmerte,
And ſhall this month hereafter, for your ſoden diſeſe;
Now wele wer hym ye lovid ſo he coud you pleſe;
I durſt ſwere upon a book that trewe heſhuld yewe fynd,
For he that is ſo yore dede is grene in yeur mynd.
Ye made me a ſory man; I dred ye wold have ſtervid.
Graunt mercy, gentil Sir, quod ſhe, that yee unaſervid:
Yee be a nobile man, ibleſſid mut yee be:
Sit down; ye ſhul drynk. Nay I wis (quod he)
I am faſtyng yit, myne own hert'is rote.
Faſtyng yit, alaſs! quod ſhe; therof I can gode bote.
She ſtert into the town and and fet a py al hote,
And ſet to fore the Pardonere; Jenken, I ween I n'ote
s that your name I yow prey. I wis, myne own ſuſtir,
o was I enformyd of them that did me foſtir.
nd what is yowrs? Kitt, iwis; ſo cleped me my dame.
nd Godd'is bleſſing have thow, Kitt; now broke wel thy name;
d privylich unlaſid his both eyen liddes,
l lokid hir in the viſage paramour amyddis,
l ſighed there with a litil time that ſhe it here myghte,
gan to rown and feyn this ſong, *Now, love, then do me righte.*

Ete and be merry, quod ſhe; why breke ye nowt your
To wait more felefhip it were but work in waſte. [faſt?
Whi make ye ſo dull chere? for your love at home?
Nay, forſooth, myne own hert, it is for you aloon. 74
For me? alaſs! what ſey ye? that wer a ſimple prey.
Trewlich yit, quod the Pardonere, it is as I yewe ſey.
Ye, etith and beth mery; we wol ſpeke thereof ſone;
Brennyd cat dredith feir: it is mery to be aloon;
For by our Lady Mary, that bare Jeſus on hir arm,
I coud nevir love yit but it did me harm, 80
For evir my manere hath be to love ovirmuch. [ſuch!
Now Criſt'is bleſſing, quod the Pardonere, go with al
Lo! how the clowdis worchyn ech man to mete his
For trewly, gentil Criſtian, I uſe the ſame tach, [mach
And have ydo many a yer: I may it nat forbere, 85
For *Kynd woll have his cours* though men the contrary ſwere:
And therewith he ſtert up ſmertly and caſt down a grote.
What ſhal this do, gentil Sir? Nay, Sir, for my cote
I n'old ye payd a peny her and ſo ſone pas.
The Pardoner ſwore his grett othe he wold pay no las.
I wis, Sir, it is ovir do, but ſith it is yowr will 91
I woll putt it in my purſe leſt yee it take in ill
To refuſe your curteſy: and therwith ſhe gan to bowe.
Now trewly, quod the Pardoner, yeur maners been to lowe,
For had ye countid ſtreytly, and nothing left behind,
I might have wele ydemed that ye be unkind, 96



And eke untrewe of hert, and ſooner me forgete,
But ye liſt be my treſorer, for we ſhall offter mete.
Now certen, quod the Tapſter, ye have a rede ful even,
As wold to God ye couth as wele undo my ſweven
That I my ſelf did mete this nyght that is ypaſſid,
How I was in a chirch when it was all ymaſſid,
And was in my devocioune tyl ſervice was al doon,
Tyl the preeſt and the clerk boyſtly bad me goon,
And put me out of the chirch with an egir mode.
Now Seynt Daniel, quod the Pardonere, your ſwevyn
turn to gode,
And I woll halſow it to the beſt, have it in yeur mynd,
For comynly of theſe ſwevyngs the contrary men ſhul
Ye have be a lover glad, and litil joy yhad; [fynd.
Plick up a luſty hert, and be mery and glad,
For ye ſhul have an huſbond that ſhall yewe wed to
That ſhal love yewe as hertly as his own lyve. [wyve,
The preeſt that put yew out of chirch ſhall lede you
in ageyne,
And helpe to yeur mariage with al his might and main.
This is the ſweven al and ſom Kit; how likith the?
Be my trowith wondir wele, bleſſid mut thowe be!
Then toke he leve at that tyme, tyll he com efftſone,
And went to his feleſhip (as it was to doon) [tere,
Thoughe it be no grete holynes to preeh this ilk ma-
And that ſom liſt to her it, yit, Sirs, ner the latter
Endurith for a while and ſuffrith them that woll, pull
And *ye ſhull her how* the Tapſter made the Pardoner

As ye ſhul here hereaftir, whan tym
To meve ſuch matere.—But now
I wol return me ageyn to the com
The Knyghte and al the feleſhip, an
Whan they wer al yloggit, as ſkil
Everich aftir his degre, to chirch t
To pas and to wend to make their
Righte as their devocioune was,
Then at chirch dorr the curteſy ga
Tyl the Knyght, of gentilnes that
the guyſe,
Put forth the prelatis, the Parſon,
A Monk that took the ſpryngill w
And did as the manere is, moilid
Everich aftir othir, righte as they

The Pardoner and the Miller, and othir lewde fotes,
Sought 'hem ſelf in the chirch right as lewd gotes,
Pyrid faſt and pourid high upon the glaſe,
Counterfetyng gentilmen the armys for to blaſe,
Diſkynering faſt the peyntur, and for the ſtory mour-
And a red al ſo right as rammys hornyd. [nid,
He berith a balſtaff, quod the toon, and els a rakid end;
Thow faileſt, quod the Miller, thow haſt nat wel thy
mynd;
It is a ſpere, yf thow canſt ſe, with a prik tofore, [bore:
To puſh a down his enmy, and through the ſhoulder
Peſe, quod the Hooſt of Southwork; let ſtond the wyn-
dow glaſid;
Goith up and doith your offerynge; ye ſemith half
amaſid:
Sith ye be in company of honeſt men and good
Worchith ſomwhat aftir them, and let the kynd of
Pas for a tyme; I hold it for the beſt, [brode
For who doith aftir company may live the bet in reſt.
Then paſſid they forth boyſtly goglingwiththeir hedis,
Knelid adown to fore the ſhrine, and hertlich their bedis
They preyd to Seint Thomas in ſuch wyſe as they
couth;
And ſith the holy relikes ech man with his mowith
Kiſſid, as a goodly monk the names told and taught,
And ſith to othir places of holynes they raught,
And wer in their devocioune tyl ſervice wer al doon,
And ſith they drowgh to dynerward as it drew to noon,

as manere and cuſtom is, ſignes there they
bought, 171
n of contre ſhuld know whome they had ſought.
ıan ſet his ſilver in ſuch thing as they likid,
ı the meen while the Miller had ypikid
ſom ful of ſignys of Caunterbury brochis, 175
ch the Pardoner and he pryvely in hir pouchis
ıut them afterwards, that noon of them it wiſt,
he Sompner ſeid ſomwhat, and ſeyd to he liſt
ɔart quod he, prively rownyng on their ere;
! pees, quod the Miller, ſeiſt thou nat the Frere,
ıe lowrith undir his hood with a doggiſh eye?
ıld be a privy thing that he coud nat aſpy; 182
ry craft he can ſomwhat, our Lady give hym
ſorowe!
, tho quod the Sompner, on eve and eke on mo-
rowe:
ſid a Tale he told of me the devill of hell hym
ſpede, 185
ıe, but yf I pay him wele and quyte wele his
ap homward that ech man tell his Tale, ſmede.
did hiderward, though we ſhuld ſet at ſale
: ſhrewdnes that I can, I woll hym nothing ſpare,
n'ol touch his takerd ſomwhat of his care. 190
ſet their ſignys upon their hedes, and ſom op-
pon their capp,
th to the dynerward they gan for to ſtapp.
man in his degre wiſh and toke his ſete,
wer wont to doon at ſoper and at mete,

And wer in ſilence for a tyme tyl good ale gan ariſe,
And then, as nature axith, as theſe old wiſe
Knowen wele, when veynys been ſomwhat replete,
The ſpirits wol ſtere, and alſo metis ſwete
Cauſen oft myrthis for to be ymevid,
And eke it was no tyme tho for to be ygrevid:
Every man in his wyſe made hertly chere,
Telling his felowe of ſportys and of chere,
And of othir mirthis that fellyn by the wey,
As cuſtom is of pylgryms, and hath been many a dey.
The Hooſt leid to his ere, of Southworke as ye knowe,
And thenkid al the company both high and lowe,
So wele kepeing the covenaunt in Southwork that was made,
That every man ſhuld by the wey with a Tale glade
All the whole company in ſhorting of the wey;
And al is wele performed: but than now thus I ſey,
That we muſt ſo homeward ech man tel anothir.
Thus we wer accordit, and I ſhuld be a rathir
To ſet yewe in governaunce by right ful jugement.
Trewly Hooſt, quod the Frer, that was all our aſſent,
With a litil more that I ſhall ſey therto:
Yee graunted of yeur curteſy that we ſhuld alſo
All the hole company ſope with yewe at nyght:
Thus I trow that it was; what ſey you, Sir Knyght?
It ſhal nat nede, quod the Hooſt, to axe no witnes;
Your record is good I nowe; and of yeur gentilnes
Yit I prey yew efft ageyn; for by Seynt Thomas ſhryne
And ye woll hold covenaunt I woll hold myne.

Now trewly Hooſt, quod the Knyght, ye have rig
wel yſeyd;
And as towching my perſone I hold me payde;
And ſo I trowe that al doith: Sirs, what ſey yee? a
The Monk and eke the Marchaunte and al ſeid Y
Then al this aftir-mete, I hold it for the beſt,
To ſport and pley us, quod the Hooſt, eche man as h
And go by tyme to ſoper and to bed alſo, [l
So mowe we erly ryſen our jorney for to do. a
The Knight aroſe therwithal, and caſt on a freſ
And his ſone anothir, to walk in the town, [gov
And ſo did all the remnaunt that wer of that aray,
That had their chaungis with them, they made th
freſh and gay,
Sortid them togidir, right as their luſtis lay, a
As they were more uſid travelling by the way.
The Knyght with his meyne went to ſe the walle
And the wards of the town, as to a knyght befall,
Deviſing ententiſlich the ſtrengthis al about,
And apointid to his ſone the perell and the dout a
For ſhot of arblaſt and of bowe, and eke for ſhot
gonne,
Unto the wardis of the town, and how it might
And al defence ther ageyn aftir his intent [wor
He declarid compendiouſly, and al that evir he m
He ſone perſeyvid every poynt, as he was full abil
To armes and to travaile and perſoue covenabill a
He was of all factur aftir fourm of kynd, [my
And for to deme his governaunce it ſemed that

Was much in his lady that he lovid beſt, [reſt.
That made hym offt to wake when he ſhuld have his
The Clerk that was of Oxenforth onto the Sompnore
ſeyd,
Me ſemeth of grete clerge that thow art amayde,
For thou putteſt on the Frer in maner of repreff,
That he knoweth falſhede, vice, and eke a theff;
And I it hold vertuouſe and right commendabill
To have very knowlech of things reprovabill;
For who ſo may eſchew it, and let it pas by,
And els he myght fall theron unward and ſodenly.
And thoughe the Frer told a Tale of a Sompnour,
Thow oughtiſt for to take it for no diſhonour,
For of al craftis and of eche degre
They be not al perfite, but ſom nyce be.
Lo! what is worthy, ſeyd the Knight, for to be a clerk;
To ſommon among us them this mocioune was ful
I comend his wittis and eke his clerge, [derke:
For of ether parte he ſaveth honeſte.
The Monk toke the Parſone then and the grey Frer,
And preyd them for curteſy for to go in fere:
I have ther acquaintaunce that al this yeris thre
Hath preyd hym by his lettris that I hym wold ſe;
And ye my brothir in habit and in poſſeſſioune,
And now I am here methinketh it is to doon,
To preve it in dede what chere he wold me make,
And to yew my frende alſo for my ſake.

mery chere,
They had, it is no doubte; for ſpycys and eke
Went round about the gaſtoyn and eke the rayn
The Wyfe of Bath was ſo wery ſhe had no wyl to
She toke the Priores by the honde; Madam,
Pryvely into the garden to ſe the herbis growe,
And aftir with our hoſt is wife in hir parlour
I wol gyve yewe the wyne and ye ſhul me alſ
For tyl we go to ſoper we have naughs ellis to
The Priores, as woman taught of gentil blo
hend,
Aſſentid to hir counſel, and forth gon they w
Paſſyng forth fofftly into the herbery,
For many a herb grewe for ſewe and ſurgery
And all the aleys feir, and parid, and raylid, a

Stalkid into the tapſtry; for nothing wold he leve
To make his covenaunte in certeyn that ſame eve;
He wold be loggit with hir, that was his hole entencioune.
But hap and eke Fortune, and all the conſtellacioune,
Was clere hym ageyns, as ye ſhul aftir here;
For hym had better be yloggit al nyght in a myere
Then he was the ſame nyght or the ſun was up;
For ſuch was his fortune he drank without the cupp;
But thereof wiſt he no delay; ne *No man of us alle*
May have that high conning to know what ſhal befall.
He ſtappid into the tapſtry wondir pryvely,
And fond hir ligging lir long with half ſlopy eye,
Pourid fellich undir hir hood, and ſawe al his comyng;
And lay ay ſtill, as naught ſhe knewe, but feynid hir ſlepyng.
He put his hond to hir breſt; Awake, quod he, awake.
A, *benedicite!* Sir, who wiſt yew her? out tho I myght
Priſoner, quod the Tapſtere, being al aloon; [be take
And therwith breyd up in a frite, and began to groon.
Now ſith ye be my priſoner yeld yew now, quod he.
I muſt nedis, quod ſhe, I may nothyng fle;
And eke I have no ſtrengith, and am but yong of age;
And alſo *It is no maſtry to caeh a mouſe in a cage*
That may no where ſtert out, but cloſid wondir faſt;
And eke, Sir, I tell yew though I had grete haſt
Ye ſhuld have coughed when ye com. Wher lern you curteſy?
Now trewlich I muſt chide, for of right pryvete

But lovers, Kitt, ben evil avyſid full o:
Wherfor I prey you hertlich hold me e
And I behote yew trewly it ſhall no n
But now to our purpoſe: how have ye
Sith I was wyth you laſt? that is my r
For yf yee eylid eny thing othir wife
Trewly it wold chaunge my chere an
I have farid the wers for yewe, quod
God that is above? and eke ye had no
For to congir me, God woot, wyth you
That have no more to vaunte me but e
And yf it were diſteynid then wer I o
I wis I trowe. Jenkyn, ye be nat to tr
For evir more ye clerkis con ſo much
Yee wol wynn a woman at firſt look

Shal I com than, Chriſtian, and feſe awey the cat?
Shal ye com? *per benedicite!* what queſtion is that?
Wherfor I prey you hertly to be my counſail;
Comyth ſomwhat late, and for nothing faill;
The dorr ſhall ſtond thar up; put it from yew ſoft,
But be wele avyſid ye wake nat them on lofft.
Care ye nat, quod Jenkin, I can theron at beſt;
Shal no man for my ſtepyng be wakid of his reſt.
Anoon they dronk the beverage, and wer of oon accord,
As it ſemed by their chere and alſo by their word:
And al a ſtaunce ſhe lovid hym wele, ſhe toke hym by the ſwere,
As though he had lernyd cury favel of ſom old frere.
The Pardoner plukkid out of his purs I trow the dowry,
And toke it Kitt in hir hond, and bad her pryvely
To orden a rere ſopor for them both to.
A cawdell ymade with ſwete wyne and with ſugir alſo,
For trewly I have no talent to ete in yeur abſence,
So longith my hert toward yew to be in yewr preſence.
He toke his leve, and went his wey as though nothing
And met wyth al the felſhip; but in what plaſe ne wher
He ſpake no word therof, but held hym cloſe and ſtyll,
As he that hopid ſikirlich to have had al his wyll,
And thought many a mery thought by hymſelf a loon:
I am a *loggit*, thought he beſt, how to exix it goon,

The Hoost of Southwork, as ye ki
ſpice of rage,
But al thing wrought prudenciall,
wiſe;
Now wol we to the ſoup, Sir Knygh
Quod the Hooſt ful curteyſly, and
The Knyght anſwer'd him ageyn,
I muſt obey, ye woot wele; but yf
Then takith theſe prelatis to yewe,
go ſit;
For I woll be yewr Marchall and ſe
And then the officers and I to ſope
They wiſh, and ſett right as he ba
his fere,
And begonne to talk of ſportis and
That they had the aftir-mete whil

They wer yſervyd honeſtly, and eche man held hym payde,
For of o manere of ſervice their ſoper was araide,
As ſkill wold and reſon, ſith the leſt of all
Payid ylike much, for growing of the gall: [ſtreight,
But yit as curteſy axith, though it wer ſom dele
The ſtatis that wer above had of the feyreſt endreyte;
Wherfor they did their gentilnes ageyn to all the rout,
They dronken wyne at their coſt onys round about.
Now paſs I lightly ovir. When they ſoupid had
Tho that were of governaunce, as wyſe men and ſad,
Went to their reſt, and made no more to doon,
But Miller and the Coke dronken by the moon
Twyes to eche othir in the repenyng;
And when the Pardoner them eſpy'd anoon he gan to
Doubill me this bourden, chokelyng in his throte, [ſing
For the Tapſter ſhuld here of his mery note:
He clepid to hym the Sompnour, that was his own diſ-
The Yeman and the Reve, and the Mancipill, [cipill,
And ſtoden ſo holowyng; for nothing wold they leve
Tyl the tyme that it was well within eve.
The Hooſt of Southwork herd them wele, and the Marchaunt both,
As they wer at a countis, and wexen ſomewhat wroth,
But yet they preyd them curteyſly to reſt for to wend,
And ſo they did all the rout; they dronk and made an end.

For to [illegible]
And in the meen while, have ye no doute,
The Tapſter and hir paramour, and the
the houſe,
Sitte togidir pryvelich, and of the beſt goul
That was ytound in town and yſet at ſale
They had there of ſufficiaunt, and dronk bi
And ſit and ete the cawdell for the Pardon
made,
With ſugir and with ſwete wyne, right
So he that payd for all in feer had not a t
For offt is more better ymerkid then ym
And ſo farid he ful right as ye have yhei
But *WLo is that a woman coud not make his*
And ſhe wer therabout, and ſet hir wyt
[illegible] wele I ly nat, and wher I do o[illegible]

hen they had ete and dronk right in the ſame plaſe,
it began to rendir out all thing as it was;
ıe wowing of the Pardoner, and his coſt alſo,
ıd how he hopid for to lygg al nyght wyth hir alſo;
ıt therof he ſhall be ſikir as of God'is cope; [ſclope
ıd ſodeynly kiſſid her paramour, and ſeyd, We ſhul
ɔgidir hul by hul, as we have many a nyght,
ıd yf he com and make noyſe, I prey yewe dub hym
Knyght.
ːa, Dame, quod hir paramour, be thou not agaſt;
his is his own ſtaff thou ſeyſt, therof he ſhall ataſt.
ow trewly, quod the hoſteler, and he com by my lot
ſ ſhall drink for Kittis love wythout cup or pot;
ıd he be ſo hardy to wake eny giſt [miſt;
nake a vowe to the pecock there ſhal wake a foul
ıd aroſe up therewithal and toke his leve anoon:
was a ſhrewid company; they had ſervid ſo many
oon.
ith ſuch manere of feleſhip ne kepe I never to dele,
e no man that levith his worſhip and his hele.
ıod Kitt to hir paramour, Ye muſt wake a whyle,
ɛ trewlich I am ſikir that within this myle
ıe Pardoner wol be comyng, his hete to aſwage,
ıt loke ye pay hym redelich to kele his corage;
ıd therfor, love, diſchance yewe not tyll this chek
ɔ, for God, Kitt, that wol I no. [be do.
ıen Kitt went to bed, and blewe out all the light,
id by that tyme it was ner hond quarter nyght.

And ſcrapid the dorr welplich, and
Aftir a doggis lyden, as nere as he
Awey, dog, with evill deth! quod h
And made hym all redy the dorr t
A! thoughtthe Pardoner, tho I trow
The Tapſter hath a paramour, an
glade
With the cawdell that I ordeyned
Now the devill hir ſpede, ſuch oon
She ſeid I had ycongerid hir; our
Now wold to God ſhe wer in ſt
borowe,
For ſhe is the falſeſt that evir yit I
To pik the mony out of my purs, I
And therewyth he caught a cardia

For when he herd a man within he was almoſt wood,
And becauſe the coſt was his no marvel tho the moud
Wer turned into vengaunce, yf it myght be:
But this was the myſchief; all ſo ſtrong as he
Was he that was within, and lighter man alſo,
As provid wele the batáile betwene them both to.
The Pardonere ſcrapid efft ageyn; for nothyng wold he blyn,
So feyn he wold have herd more of hym that was within.
What dog is that? quod the paramour; Kit, woſt thou ſere?
Have God my trowith, quod ſhe, it is the Pardonere.
The Pardoner, with myſcheff! God gyve hym evil
Sir, ſhe ſeid, by my trowith he is the ſame theff. preff!
Therof thou lieſt, quod the Pardoner, and might nat long forbere.
A thy fals body! quod he; the devil of hell the tere!
For by my trowith a falſher ſawe I nevir noon,
And nempnid hir namys many mo then oon,
Though to rech hir wer noon honeſte
Among men of good worſhip and degre.
But, ſhortly to conclude; when he had chid inowe
He axid his ſtaff ſpitouſlich, with wordis ſharp and rowe.
Go to bed, quod he within; no more noyſe thow make;
Thy ſtaff ſhal be redy to morowe I undertake.
In ſoth, quod he, I wol nat fro the dorr wend
Tyl I have my ſtaff. Thow bribour, then have the *podir end,*

Graspyng ...
And fond hym othir wny...
With the ſtaffys end high upon the brov
The hoſteler ley oppon his bed and herd
And ſtert hym up lightlich, and thought
He toke a ſtaff in his hond, and highed v
Tyl he wer with the feleſhip that ſhuld r
What be yee? quod the hoſteler; and kne
wele.
Hyuſt! peſe, quod the paramour: Jak,
Ther is a theff, I tell the, within this h
A theff! quod Jak; this is is a nobill ch
That thou hym haſt yfound, yf weehy
Yis, yis, care the nought; with hym
Wele inowe or he be go, yf ſo we ha
For we to be ſtrong inowe with o m
... quod Jak, breke th

And I wol kepe the dorr; he ſhall not ſtert out.
Nay, for God that wol I nat, leſt I cach a clout,
Seid the todir to Jak, for thou knowiſt bettir then I
All the eſtris of this houſe; go up thyſelf and ſpy.
Nay, for ſoth, quod Jak, that were grete unrighte
To aventur oppon a man that with hym did not fighte:
Sithens thou haſt hym bete and with thy ſtaff ypilt,
Me thinkith it wer no reſon that I ſhuld bere the gilt;
For by the blyſyng of the cole he myght ſe myne hede,
And lightly lene me ſuch a ſtroke my hond to be dede.
Then wol we do by common aſſent ſeeh hym al about;
Who that metith hym firſt pay him on the ſnout;
For methought I herd hym here laſt among the pannys.
Kepe thou the toder ſide, but ware the watir cannys,
And if he be herein ryght ſone we ſhull hym fynde,
And we to be ſtrong inowghe o theffe for to bynde.
Aha ha! thought the Pardoner, beth the pannys aryn?
And drowghe oppon that ſide, and thought oppon a gynne;
So at laſt he fond oon, and ſet it on his hede,
For as the caſe was fall ther' to he had grete nede:
But yit he graſpit ferthirmore to have ſomwhat in hond
And fond a grete ladill right as he was gonde,
And thought for to ſterte out betwene them both to woo,
And waytid wele the paramour that had doon hym
And ſet him with the ladill on the gruſcill on the noſe,
That all the week after he had ſuch a poſe,

in waterid erlich by the morowe,
the cauſe of it had ther'of noforo
'ardoner. As he wold ſtertawey
: with hym, but nothyng to his pay:
n ſo ſwith the pan fill him fro,
· aftir hym as blyve as he myght go,
n a brondeal unware,
n beter to have goon more aſware,
e pann met with his ſhynne,
. veyn and the next ſyn:
: was grene he thought litil on,
neneſs was apaſt the greff fat ner the
is hond to grope wher it fete, [bone;
ond he was yhurt the Pardoner he
threte,
:ynt Amyas that he ſhuld abigg
l and ſore even oppon the rigg;
it fynd he nothyng wold hym ſpare.
ardoner wele, and held hym bettir a
· he had ſtrokis ryght inough. [ſquare,
·mys, his bak, and his browe.
he paramour, where is the theff ago?
Jak; right now he lept me fro,
s go with hym, for I have harm and

nd I alſo and he goith nat al quyte:
ht hym fynd we wold aray hym ſo
.ve legg ne ſcot to morowe on to go,

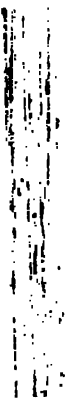
But how ſhull we hym fynd? the moon is adown,
(As grace was for the Pardoner) and eke when they did roun
He herd them evir wele inowe, and went the more aſyde,
And drew him evir bakward, and let the ſtrokis glide.
Jak, quod the paramour, I hold it for the beſt,
Sith the moon is down, for to go to reſt,
And make the gatis faſt; he may not then aſtert,
And eke of his own ſtaff he berith a redy mark,
Wherby thou mayeſt him knowe among all the route,
And thou ber a redy ey, and weyt wele aboute
To morowe when they ſhul wend; this is the beſt rede:
Jak, what ſeyſt thou therto? is this wele yſeyd?
Thy wit is clere, quod Jak; thy wit mut nedis ſtond.
He made the gatis faſt; ther is no more to doen.
The Pardoner ſtode aſide, his chekis ron and bled,
And was ryght evil at eſe al nyght in his hede:
He muſt of force lige lyke a colyn ſwerd,
Tit it mevid him wondir ſore for making of his berd;
He payd at full ther'fore through a womans art
For wyne and eke for cawdill, and had ther'of no part:
He ther'for preyd Seynt Juliane, as ye mowe onderſtonde,
That the devill her ſhulde ſpede on watir and on londe,
To diſſeive a travellyng man of his herbergage,
And coud not elſe ſave curs his angir to aſwage;

That bare about his neck a gret
Becauſe that he was ſpetouſe, ar
The clog was hongit about his
nat wite
Nothyng the dogg'is maiſter yf
So fur to excuſe them both it w
The Pardoner wold have loggi
ſomwhat nigh,
The warrok was a wakid and caug
And bote hym wondir ſpetouſly
couch,
That the Pardoner myght nat n
But held hym a ſquare by that c
As holſom was at that tyme for t
He coud noon othir help, but lev

But ley as ſtill as eny ſtone, remembryng his folv,
That he wold truſt a Tapſter of a common hoſtry;
For commonly for the moſt part they ben wyly echon.
But now to alle the company a morrow whan they
ſhuld gon 656
Was noon of all the feleſhip half ſo ſone ydight
As was the gentil Pardoner; for al tyme of the nyght
He was aredy in his aray, and had nothing to doon
Saffe ſhake alite his eris, and trus and be goone. 660
Yet or he cam in company he wiſh away the blood;
And bond the ſorys to his hede with the typet of his hood,
And made light ſom chere, for men ſhuld nat ſpy
Nothyng of his turment ne of his luxury;
And the hoſteler of the houſe, for nothyng he coud pry,
He coud nat knowe the Pardoner among the company
Amorowe when they ſhuld wend, for ought that they
coud pour, 667
So wyſely went the Pardoner out of the dogg'is bour,
And blynched from the hoſteler, and turned offt about,
And evirmore beheld hym amydward of the rout, 670
And was evir ſyngyng to make al thyng good;
But yit his notis wer ſomwhat low for aking of his hede:
So at that tyme he had no more grame,
But held hym to his hapynes to ſcape ſhame. 674
The Knyght and al the feleſhip forward gon they wend,
Paſſyng forth merely to the town'ys end;
And by that tyme they wer ther the day began to rype,
And the ſon merely upward gan he pike,

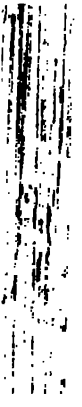
Pleying undir the egge of the firmament.
Now, quod the Hooſt of Southwork, and to th
Who ſawe evir ſo feyr or ſo glad a day, [ſhi
And how fote this feſon is entring into May? |
The thruſtelis and the thrusſhis in this glad
The ruddok and the goldfynch; but the nyghty
Ha amerous notis lo how he twynyth ſmall!
Lo how the trees grenyth that nakid wer, a
Bare this month afore but their ſommer cloth
Lo how Nature makith for them evirichone!
And as many as ther be he forgettith noone!
Lo how the feſon of the yere and Averell ſhour
Deith the busſhis burgyn out bloſſoms and flo
Lo the pryme roſis how freſh they ben to ſene
And many othir flouris among the graſis gre
Lo how they ſpryng, and ſprede, and of diver
Beholdith, and feith both rede, white, and blu
That luſty bin and comfortabill for mann'ys fi
For I ſey for my ſelf it makith my hert to lig
Now ſith Almighty Soveryn hath ſent ſo feir
Let ſe now, as covenant is, in ſhorting of the
Who ſhall be the firſt that ſhall unlace his ma
In comfort of us al, and gyn ſome mery Tale
For and we ſhuld now begyn to draw lot
Peraventure it myght fal ther it ought not,
On ſom unluſty perſone that wer not wele aw
Or ſeny bouſy ovyr eve, and had yſong and cr

Somwhat ovir much : how ſhuld he than do?
For *Who ſhuld tell a Tale he muſt have good wyll therto.*
And eke ſom men faſtyng beth glewid and ybound
In their tongis ; and ſome faſtyng beth nothyng jocound ;
And ſom in the morning their mouthis beth adoun ;
Tyll that they be charmyd their wordis woll not ſoun.
So thys is my concluſioune and my laſt knot,
It wer grete gentilnes to tell without lot.
By the rood of Bromholm, quod the Marchant tho,
As fer as I have failed, riden and ygo,
Sawe I nevir man yet tofore this ilk day
So wele coud rule a company as our Hoſt, in fay ;
His wordis ben ſo comfortabill, and comyth ſo in ſeThat my wit is ovircome to make eny reſon [ſon,
Contrary to his counſaill at myn ymagynacioune,
Wher'for I woll tell a Tale to your conſolacionne,
In enſampill to yowe that when that I have do
Anothir be right redy then for to tell, ryght ſo
To fulfyll our Hooſt'is wyll and his ordinaunce.
There ſhall no fawte be found in me : gode wyl ſhal be
With this I be excuſid of my rudines, [my chaunce :
Altho' I cannot peynt my Tale, but tell it as it is,
Lepyng ovir no ſentence, as ferforth as I may,
But tell yewe the yolke and put the white away.



And worthieſt in his dayes, at
Of worſhip ne of wele, ne of ;
For alle londis chriſtened ther
And all othir natiouns, of wha
Whils the Emperour was hole,
I mainteyned in honour ; and i
Rome was then obeied of all C
But it farith ther'by as it doith
For though nethir cete, regiour
Beth nat nowe ſo worthy as w
As we fynd in romaunces, in g
For *All things doith waſt. and ele*
Ys more ſhorter then it was ; and o
Mowe nat comprehende now in
As ſom tyme myght theſe old w

But yit the name is evir oon of Rome as it was groundit
After *Remus & Romulus*, that firſt that cete foundit,
That brethren weren both to, as old bokis writen;
But of ther lef and governaunce I wol nat now enditen,
But of othir mater that fallith to my mynd;
Wher'for, gentill Sirs, ye that beth behind
Drawith ſomwhat nere thikker to a rout,
That my wordis may ſoune to ech man about.
Aftir theſe 2 brethren Romulus and Remus
Julius Cæſar was Emperour, that rightful was of
This cete he governed nobilich wele, [*Domus.*
And conquered many a regioune, as cronicull doth us telle;
For, ſhortly to conclude, al tho wer adverſaryes
To Rome in his dayis he made them tributaries;
So had he in ſubjectioune both frend and foon,
Of which I tell yew trewly Englond was oon.
Yit aftir Julius Cæſar, and ſith that Criſt was bore,
Rome was governed as wele as it was before,
And namelich in that tyme and in the ſame yeris
When it was governed by the Doſeperis;
As ſemeth wele by reſon, who ſo can entend,
That *O mann'ys wyt ne wyll may not comprehend*
The boucheff and the myſcheff, as may many bedis;
Ther'for ther operaciouns, ther domes, and ther dedes,
Were ſo egallich ydoon; for in all Criſten londis
Was *noon that they* ſparid for to mend wrongis.



Was Emperour ycnoie, as fill
In whoſe tyme ſikerlich the 7
In Rome dwellyng decently;
How they were yclepid, or I
I woll tell you the names of th
And declare yeu the cauſe why
The firſt was ycleped Sother I
This is thus much for to ſey, a
And ſo he did trewly; for levi
Then do or ſey eny thing that ſc
So cleen was his conſcience yſet
Marcus Stoycus the ſecond, ſo
That is to mene in our conſtert
And ſo he did full trewe; for th
He wrote them evir trewly, an
But ſuch as was ordynid

As any ppofid of all the long yere, [chere,
That myght have made hym fory or chongit onys
But evirmore rejoycing, what that evir betid,
For his hert was evir mery, right as the fomer bridd.
Summus Philopater was the fifft'is name,
That thoughe men wold flee hym, or do hym al the
Angir, or difefe, as evil as men couthe, [fhame,
Yet wold he love them nevir the wers in hert ne in
mowith.
His will was cleen undir his foot, and nothing hym above,
Ther'for he was clepid *Fatbir of perfite love.*
The 6 and the 7 of thefe Sevin Sages
Was Stypio and Sithero, as thes word Aftrolages
Was firname to them both aftir their fciences;
For of aftronomy fikerlich the cours and all the fences
Bothe they knowhit wele inoughe, and wer right fotil
But now to othir purpofe, for her I woll depart [of art.
As lightly as I can, and draw to my matere.
In that fame tyme that thefe Sages were
Dwelliyng thus in Room, a litill without the walles,
In the fubarbis of the town, of chambris and of hallis,
And all other howfeing that to a lord belongit,
Was noon wythyn the cete, ne noon fo wele behongit
With docers of highe pryfe, ne wallid fo aboute,
As was a Senatours hous wythyn and eke wythoute.
Favinus was his name, a worthe man and rich;
And, for to fey fhortlych, in Room was noon hym lyche.
His portis and his eftris were full evenaunte
Of trefour and of lordfhyp; alto the moft vailant

grame,
As yee ſhull here aſtir, when ti
For *Aſtir ſwete the ſoure comyth*
For as ſone as he coud go and
All that he ſet his ey on, or aft
Anoon he ſhuld it have, for no
But it had be well bettir he ha
Noriture and gentilnes, and ha
For it fill ſo aſtir wyth what cl
Yf the pley ne likid hym he w
Or wyth aknyff hym hurt ryght
For ther nas knyght ne ſquyer i
That thought his owne perſon
That did or ſeyd eny thing Ber
That he n'old ſpetouſly anoon
Wher'of his fadir had ioy — 11

And thoughe men wold pleyne ful ſhort it ſhuld availe,
For Fawnus was ſo myghty, and cheff of all counſaill
With Auguſtyn the Emperour, that all men hym drad,
And lete pas ovir miſchefe and harmys that they had.
Berinus ferthermore lovid wel the diſe,
And for to pley at hazard, and held ther'of grete pryſe,
And all othir gamys that loſery was in,
And evirmore he loſt, and nevir myght wyn.
Berynus at hazard many a nyght he wakid,
And oft tyme it fill ſo that he cam hom al nakid:
And that was all his joy, for right wele he knew
That Agea his modir wold cloth hym newe.
Thus Berynus lyvid, as I have told to fore,
Tyll he was of the age of 18 yere or more.
But othir whyls amongis for pleyntis that were grete
Fawnus made amendis, and put them in quiete:
So was the fadir cauſe the ſone was ſo wyld;
And ſo have many mo ſuch of his own child
Be cauſe of his undoyng, al we mowe ſe al day;
For *Thing ytake is hard to put awey,*
As hors that evir trottid, trewlich I yow telle,
It were hard to make hym aftir to ambill welle:
Ryght ſo by Beryn; when he had his luſt and wyll
when he was lite
It ſhuld be hevy afterward to reve his old delite,
Save the whele of Fortune, that no man may with-
For every man on lyve ther'on he is gond; [ſtonde,
O ſpoke ſhe turnyd bakward, righte at high noone,
All ageyn Berinus, as ye ſhull here ſone.

Agea his modir fell in grete ſekenes,
And ſent aftir huſbond wyth wordis hire to lis,
And for ſhe wold tell hym hir hole hert'is wyll
Er ſhe out of the world partid, as it was right and ſkill.
When Fawnus was ycome, and ſaw ſo rodyleſe
Hys wyff that was ſo dere, that for love he cheſe,
No mervell though his hert wer in grete mournyng,
For he purſeyvyd fullich ſhe drewe to hir endyng:
Yit made he othir chere then in his hert was
To put awey diſcomfort, diſſimilyng wyth his faſe
The hevynes of his hert: wyth chere he did it cloſe,
For ſuch a manner craft ther is wyth them can gloſe;
Save that tournyth all to cautele: but Fawnus did natſo,
For wetith wele in certeyn his hert was full of wo
For his wyff Agea; and yit for craft he cowth
The teris fro his eyin ran doun by his mowith:
When he ſaw the pangis of deth comyng ſo faſt
Oppon his wyff Agea almoſt his hert to braſt.
Agea lyfft up hir eyen, and beheld the chere
Of hir huſbond Fawnus, that was ſo trew a fere,
And ſeyd, Sir, why do ye thus? this is an elying fare
In comfort of us both, yf yee might ſpare
And put awey thys hevynes whyle that yee and I
Myght ſpeke of othir thyngis, for Deth me nyghith
For to bodyne to ſoule this vailyth nat a karſe. [nygh,
Now tellyth on, quod Fawnus, and I wol lete it pas
For the time of talkyng as wele as I may,
But out of my remembraunce onto my endyng day

Yeur deth woll nevir, I woot it wele, but evir be in my mynd.
Then, good Sir, quod Agea, beth to my ſoule kynd
When my body is out of ſight, for therto have I nede,
For truer make then yee be in word ne in dede
Had nevir woman, ne more kyndnes
Hath ſhewed unto his make, I know right wele iwis:
Now wold ye ſo her after in hert be as trewe,
To lyve wythout make, and on yeur ſone rewe,
That litill hath ylernid ſithens he was bore:
Let hym have no ſtepmodir, for children have tofore
Comelich they lovith nat: wherfor wyth hert I prey
Have chere onto yeur ſone aftir my endyng day;
For ſo God me help and I lafft yew behynd
Shuld nevir man on lyve bryng it in my mynd
To be no more yweddit, but lyve ſoule aloon.
Now yee know all my wyll, good Sir, think ther'on.
Certis, quod Fawnus, whils I have wyttis fyve
I think nevir aftir yew to have another wyff.
The preeſt was com therwythall for to do hir rightis;
Fawnus toke his leve, and all the othir knyghtis,
Hir kyndrid and frendis kiſſed hir echone:
't is no nede to axe wher ther was dole or noon.
Agea caſt her ey up, and lokid all aboute,
and wold have kiſſid Beryn, but then was he wythleying to the hazard, as he was wont to doon, [oute,
r as ſone as he had ete he wold ren out anoon;

And had armour for it, right as
And ſwore and ſtarid as he wa
the game.
The damſell ſeyd to Beryn, Sir
For but ye hygh blyve that yee
Yeur mothir woll be dede; ſhe
Yf ye wol ſpeke wyth her yee n
Who bad ſo, lewd Kitt? Your f
Go home, lewd viſenag, that evi
Quod Beryne to the damſell, and
And bad the devill of hell hir ſh
Haſt thow ought els to do but l
Now by God in hevin, by Pete
Quoth Beryn in grete angir, an
bell,

And loſt wyth that ſame caſt al was leyde adown,
And ſtert up in a wood rage, and ballid on his crown,
And ſo he did the remnaunt, as many as wold abyde;
But for drede of Fawnus his ſelawis gan to hyde,
And nevir had wyll, ne liſt, wyth Beryn for to fyght,
But evir redy to pley and wyn what they myght.
The deth of Agea ſprang about the towne,
And every man that herd the bell for her ſowne
Bemony'd her full ſore; ſaff Beryn toke none hede,
But ſought anothir feleſhip, and quyklich to them yede,
To ſuch manner company as ſhuld nevir thryve,
For ſuch he lovid bettir then his modir's lyve; [drawe,
And evirmore it ſhuld be nyght or he wold home
For of his ſadir in certeyn he had no manner awe;
For evir in his yowith he had al his wyll,
And was ypaſſid chaſtiſing but men wold hym kyll.
Fawnus for Agea, as it was well fitting,
Made grete ordenaunce for hir burying,
Of prelatis and of preeſtis, and of al othir thyng,
As thoughe ſhe had be a wyff of a worthy king
It myght nat have be mendit; ſuch was his gentilnes,
For at hir enteryng was many a worthy meſſe.
For four weeks full, or he did her intere,
She ley in lede wythyn his houſe; but Beryn cam not
Namelich into the place where his modir ley, [there,
Ne onys wold he a *Pater noſter* for hir ſoule ſey:
His thought was all in unthryft, lechery, and dyſe,
And drawyng all to foly, for *Yowith* is reckles

This mowe we know verely by e
That *Yerd makith vertu and bencol*
In childhode for to growe, as provitl
A plant whils it is grene, or it have
A man may wyth his fyngers ply
And make ther'of a ſhakill, a wit
But let the plant ſtond, and yeris
Men ſhull not wyth both his hond
bowe:
No more myght Fawnus make hi
When he grew in age, to his lore
For every day when Beryn roſe un
And draw hym to his feleſhip as e
And then com home and ete, and
nyght:

All his ſhrewd taichis wyth goodnes if he myght,
And taught hym feir and ſoft, but Beryn toke it light,
And countid at litill pryſe al his fadir's tale.
Fawnus ſaw it wold nat; with colour wan and pale
He partid from his ſone, and wyth a ſorowfull hert.
I ne can write halfyndele how ſore he did ſmert
The diſobeying of his ſone and his wyf'is deth,
That, as the book tellith, he wisſhed that his breth
Had ybeen above the ſerkill celeſtyne,
So fervent was his ſorowe, his angir, and his pyne.
So, ſhortly to conclude, Agea was interid,
And Fawnus livid wyſles 3 yere wer ywerid,
Wher'of ther was grete ſpeche for his high honour;
Tyll at laſt word cam onto the Emperour
That Fawnus was without wyſe, and ſeld was jocounde,
But mournyng for Agea that he was to ybound,
And lyvid as an hermyte, ſoule and deſtitute,
Wythout conſolacioune, penſyff oft and mute:
Wher'for Auguſtinus, of Rome the Emperour,
Was inwardlich ſory, and in grete dolour.
Wyth that the 7 Sagis and Senatouris all
Were aſſemblid, to diſcryve what ſhuld ther'of fall;
The wych ſeyd ſhortly, For a moleſtatioune
Ther was noon othir remedy but a conſolacioune;
For *Whoſo wer in eny thing diſpleſid or agrevid*
Muſt by a like thing egall be remevid.
And when the Emperour knew all their determina-
Quicklich in his mynd he had imaginacioune{cioune.

That Fawnus for Agea was in high diſtres,
And muſt ycurid be wyth paſſyng gentilnes
Of ſom luſty lady, that of pulchritude
Were excellent al othir: ſo, ſhortly to conclude,
The Emperour had a love tofore he had a wyf
That he lovid as hertlich as his own lyf,
As was as feir a creature as ſone myght beſhyne;
So excellent of bewte that ſhe myght be ſhryne
To all othir wymmen that wer tho lyvand:
But for the Emperour had a wyf ye ſhul wele onder-
He cam nat in hir company to have his delite; [ſtond
For Criſtendome and conſcience was tho more perfite
Then it is now adayis, yf I durſt tell:
But I wol leve at this tyme. Than Fawnus al ſo ſwell
Was aftir ſent in haſt, of ſeknes to be curyd;
So what for drede and ellis they wer both enſuryd
In preſence of the Emperour, ſo Fawnus myght nat flee;
It was the Emperours wyll, it myght noon othir be.
So wythin a tyme Agea was forgete,
For Fawnus thought litill on that he hir behight:
For as the 7 Sagis had afore declarid
It cam all to purpos; for Fawnus litil carid
For eny thing at all ſave his wyff to pleſe,
That Rame was yclepid; for reſt nethir eſe
Fawnus nevir had but of her preſence:
So was his hert on her yſet that he coud no defence,
Save evirmore be wyth hir, and ſtare on hir viſage,
That the moſt part of Room held it for dotage,

And had much marvell of his variaunce:
But *What is that Fortune cannat put in chance?*
For ther n'as man on lyve on woman more bedotid
Then Pawnus was in Rame, ne half ſo much yſotid.
Wyth that Rame had knowlech that Fawnus was yſmyt
Wyth the dart of Love: yee mowe ryght wele it wyt
That all that evir ſhe coud caſt or ythynck
Was all ageyn Berynus, for many a ſotill wrench
She thought and wrought day by day, as meny wemen doon,
Tyll they have of their deſire the full concluſioune:
For the more that Fawnus of Rame did mede
The more dangerous was Rame and of chere ſade,
And kept wele hir purpoſe undir covirture:
She was the las to blame; it grew of nature.
But though that Rame wrought ſo, God forbede that
Wer of that condicioune. Yet touch no man the gall,
It is my plein counſell, but doith as othir doith:
Take yeur part as it comith of roughe and eke of ſmoothe.
Yit noritur, wit and gentilnes, reſon and perfite mynde,
Doth all theſe worthy women to worch agenys kynde,
That thoughe they be agrevid they ſuffir and endure,
And paſſith ovir for the beſt, and folowith nothing nature.

For and he pley ſo long half c
Wold ſcarſly ſuffiſe hymſelf o
And n'ere yee wold be grevid
He ſhuld aftir this dey be clot
But he wold kepe them bettir
Now gentill wyff, grāmcy of
I thynk wel the more that I ſe
For towchyng my grevaunce,
Treulich that grevaunce is for
Let hym aloon, I prey yew, an
For in ſuch loſery he hath loſt
The devil hym ſpede that recl
And he uſe it hereaftir as he h
Beryn aroſe a morowe, and cr
And axid aftir clothis, but it w

He went into the chambir ther his ſone ley,
And ſet hym down in a chair, and thus he gan to ſey:
My gentil ſone Beryn, now feir I wol ye teche;
Rew oppon thy ſelf, and be thyne own leche.
Manhode is ycom now, myne own dere ſone,
It is tyme thow be aweyntyd of thyn old wone:
And thow art 2.: wynters, and naught haſt of doctryne;
Yit woldiſt thow draw to perfite the worſhip wold be thyne,
To noritur and goodſhip, and al honeſt thing,
Ther myght com to myn hert no more glad tyding.
Leve now al thy foly and thy rebawdry,
As tablis and mervellis, and the hazardry,
And draw the to the company of honeſt men and good,
Els leve thow me as wele as Criſte died on the rode;
And for al menkynd his ghoſt pas lete,
'how ſhalt for me heraftir ſtond on thyn own fete,
ar I woll no longir ſuffir this aray
o clothe the al new eche othir dey. [draw,
'thow wolt draw the to wit, and rebawdry with-
ſuch good as God have ſent yn part have ſhalt thow:
i yf thow wolt nat, my ſone, do as I the tell,
ne ſhalt thow naught have, truſt me right well.
ıyſt thow wyth thy diſe-pleying hold myn honoure
my deth dey? Then Beryn gan to loure,
'eide, Is this a ſermon or a prechement?
:re nat wont herto; how is this ywent?

Benedicite: fadir, who hath
And ſet you into ire, to mak
But I know wele inough wh
Trewlich of yeur own wyfe
Com oppon hir body that fa
For trewlich, fadir, yee dot
Alas that evir a man ſhuld, tha
Set all his wyſdom on his wyv'
Yee lovith hir ſo much ſhe l
And I may curs the tyme th
For now I am in certen I ha
They been ſhrewis, ſom ther
Vel Fikil Flaptail, ſuch oon
For all my pleying at diſe y
Yee have yloſt yeur name.
So dote ye on hir, and levit

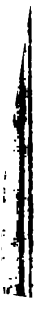
He gropid al about to have found oon,
As he was wont tofore, but ther was noon.
Then toke he fuch willokis as he fond ther,
And beheld hymfelf what man he wer;
For when he was arayde then gan he firſt be wro
For his womb lokid out and his rigg both.
He ſtert aftir his fadir, and he began to cry,
For ſeth myn aray, for the villany
Ys as wele yeurs as it is myne.
Fawnus let him clatir and cry wel and fyne,
And paſſid forth ſtill and ſpak nat a word.
Then Beryn gan to think it was nat al bord
That his fadir ſeyde when he wyth hym was,
And gan to think all about, and therwyth ſeid Alaſs!
Now know I wele forſoth that my modir is dede;
For tho gan he to glow firſt a fory mann'ys hede.
Now kepe thy cut, Beryn, for thou ſhalt have a fit,
Somwhat of the world to lern betir wit;
For and thow wiſt ſikerly what ys for to com
Thow woldiſt wiſh aftir thy deth full oft and ylome;
For *Ther n'ys betying half ſo ſore wyth ſtaff nethir ſwerd*
Is man to be bete with his own yerd.
he pyry is yblowe, hop, Beryn, hop,
hat ripe wol heraftir and on thyn hede drop:
ou tokiſt noon hede whils it ſhoou hoot,
er'for wynter the nyghith afay by thy cote.
yn for ſhame to town durſt he nat go,
toke his wey to churchward; his frend was made.

I ſhall know and fele that my
Alas! I ſmote the meſſanger
Alas! I am right pore; alas!
Alas! I ſclept to faſt, tyl ſorow
Alas! I hungir ſore; alas! for
For eche man me ſeith hath
This was all his mirth to the
That of his modir Agea he to
When Beryn was within the
As ſone as he ſaw the tomb wl
His colour gan to chaunge int
Alas, gentil modir! ſo kynd
It is no mervell for thy deth t
But therewythal the ſorowe ſ
That ſodenly he fil down ſtan

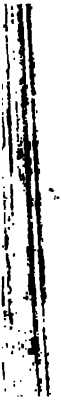
So at laſt when Beryn a litill wakid were
He trampelid faſt with his fete, and al to tare his ere
And his viſage both, right as a wodeman,
With many a bitir tere that from his eyen ran,
And ſighid many a ſore ſigh, and had much hevynes,
And evirmore he curſid his grete unkyndnes
To foreyit his modir whils ſhe was alyve,
And lenyd to hir tombe opon his tore ſclyve,
And wiſhid a thowſand ſithis he had ybe hir by,
And beheld hir tombe with a petouſe eye. [of nought,
Now, glorious God! quod Beryn, that al thing madiſt
Heven and erth, man and beſte, ſith I am myſwrought
Of yewe I axe mercy, ſocour, and help, and grace,
For my myſdede and foly, unthryffe and treſpaſe:
Set my ſorowe and peyn ſomwhat in meſure
Fro diſpeir and myſcheff as I may endure.
Lord of all lordis! though Fortune be my foo
Yit is thy myght above to turn hym to and fro.
Firſt my modirs lyfe Fortune hath me berevid,
And ſith my fadirs love, and nakid alſo me levid.
What may he do more? Yis, take awey my lyfe;
But for that wer myn eſe, and end of al ſtryfe,
Ther'for he doith me lyve for my wers I ſey,
That I ſhuld evirmore lyve and nevir for to dey.
Now leve I Beryn with his modir tyl I com aye,
And wol return me to Rame, that of hir ſotilte
Bethoughte hir al aboute, when Beryn was agoon
That it ſhuld be wittid hir, wher'for ſhe anoon

For I am his ſtepmou..., ..
The violence, the wrath, the angir, anc
That is betwene yew both, it wol be w
Wher'for I prey you hertly doith hym
Nay, by trowith, quod Fawnus, for me
Sithe he of my wordis ſo litil priſe ſet
As litil ſhall I charge his eſtate alſo:
Sorowe have that rechith though he n
For every man knowith that he is nat
Wher'for may be ſuppoſid his pleying
Is cauſe of his aray, and nothyng yee,
Yes, iwis, quod Rame, the tale woll
Of me and of noon othir, I know rig
Wher'for I prey you, gentil Sir, and
That he wer yfet hom, and that in
... ...evn with feirne

From o ſtrete to anothir, enqueryng to and fro
Aftir Beryn in every plaſe wher he was wont to go,
Seching eviry halk howris too or thre,
With hazardours, and othir ſuch, ther as he was wont to be,
And fond hym nat ther; but to chirch went echone,
And at dorr they ſtode a while and herd Beryn made his mone:
They herd all his compleynt, that petouſe was to here.
Fawnus into the chirch pryvelych gan pire,
But al ſo ſone as he beheld wher Agea lay
His teris ran down be his chekis, and thus he gan to ſey:
A, Agea! myn old love, and my new alſo!
Alas, that evir our hertis ſhuld depart atoo!
For in your graciouſe dayis of hert'is trobilnes
I had nevir knowlech, but of all gladnes;
Remembryng in his hert, and evir gan renewe
The goodnes betwene them both, and hir hert trewe,
And drew hym ner to Beryn with an hevy mode.
But as ſone as Beryn knew and ondirſtode
That it was his fadir he wold no longir abide,
But anoon he voidit by the todir ſide,
And Fawnus hym encountrid, and ſeyd, We have the fought
Through the town, my gentil ſone, and ther'for void the nought.
Though I ſeyd a word or two, as me thought for the the beſt
For thyne erudicioune, to draw the onto lyfe honeſt,

For wele I woot for thy ..
Alſo thou haſt grete ſorowe, but onys
more:

And ther'for, ſone, on my bleſſing to pu
Drawe the nowe heraftir to honeſt m
Lo ther is clothing for yewe, and yeu
Wyth harneys all freſhe new; and if y
I ſhall yit or eve that bergeyn undirt
That the Emperour for my love a l
And what that evir ye nede anoon it
For whilsthat I have eny thing ye ſha
Graunt mercy! quod Beryn with a
Of yeur worſhipfull profir that ye
But ordir of knyghthode to take is n
And ſith yeur will is for to do ſon
[illegible] love wele, and

ɔward me from dey to dey, but ye wold aply
mwhat to hir purpoſe and aftir hir yew guy;
e wold wex ſo ovirtwart and of ſo lither tach,
ıd evir lour undir her hood a redy for to ſnache;
e wold be ſhortyng of yeur lyfe, and that deſire I naught:
her'for to pleſe all about, my purpoſe and my thought
for to be a Marchaunte, and leve myne heritage,
ıd releſe it for evir, for ſhyppis fyve of ſtage
ıll of marchaundiſe the beſt of all this londe:
ıd yf ye wol ſo, ſadir, quyk let make the bonde.
wnus was right well apayd that ilk word outſtert,
it yit he ſeyd to Beryn, I mervell in myn hert
her haddiſt thou this counſaile to leve thyne honour,
ıd lyve in grete aventure and in grete labour;
ıd rid ſo forth talkyng a ſoft eſy paſe
ɔmward to his plaſe ther that Rame was.
ıd as ſone as Fawnus was ylight adown,
ıd highid faſt to his wyfe, and with hir gan to rown,
ıd told hir all the purpoſe, and made Fawnus chere,
e did hym nat half ſo much the tyme ſhe was his fere.
e hullid hym, and mollid hym, and toke hym about the nekk,
ıd went low for the kite, and made many a bekk;
ıd ſeyd, Sir, by yeur ſpech now right well I here
ıat yf ye liſt ye mowe do thing that I moſt deſire;



Hertlich hir bracyd, and [illegible]
I ſuyr yew my trowith that onys o
That I ſhall do my devoir without
For to pleſe your hert fullich in all
Graunt mercy! myn own ſoveren
And made proteſtatioune that ſhe
All the dayis of hir lyſe be to hym
As evir woman was to man, as fe
And wit hir wold ſerve, and mad
Fawnus bood no longir, but forth
A! precious God in heven, Kyng
So plentivouſe this world is of in
Why is to yſuffrid that trowith is b
Wyth trechery and falſhede in feld a
But now to Fawnus and his ente
[illegible] ſoft by the hond: his

And yf that I were dede whils thow wer oute
Lond and rent, and all my good, have thou no doute,
It wold be plukkid from the; thy part wold be left:
And alſo ferthermore, I make oon beheeſt,
That I trowe my moblis wol nat ſuffiſe
To charge fyve ſhippis ful of marchandiſe
But yf I leyd in mortgage my lond and eke my rent,
And that I leve be nat thy wyll ne thyn entent:
Yit nethirles yf thy hert be ſo inly ſet
For to be a Marchaunt, for nothing woll I let
That I n'yl do thy pleſaunce as ferforth as I mey
To go ryght nygh myn own eſtate, but levir I had nay.
Their wordis ne their dedis, ne matters them betwene,
I wol nat tary now ther'on my perchemen to ſpene:
But fynallich, to the end of their accordèment,
Fawnus had ſo goon about, yturned and ywent,
That he had brought his ſone tofore the Emperour,
To releſe his heritage and al his honour,
That he ſhuld have aftir his dey, for ſhippis fyve, and
Yled of marchaundiſe of lynnyn and of wool, [full
And of othir thingis that wer yuſid tho.
Engroſid was the covenaunt betwene them to
Yn preſence of the Emperour, in opyn and no rown,
Tofore the gretiſt Cenators and eldeſt of the town.
So when the releſe ſelid was with a ſyde bonde
They wer yleyd both in a meen honde
Into the tyme that Beryn fullich ſeſid were
In the fyve ſhippis that I yew told ere.

Alas! this jals world, ſo ful of trechery!
In whom ſhuld the ſone have truſt and feith fikir
If his fadir ſaylid hym? whether myght he go
For to fynd a fikir frend that he myght truſt to?
So when theſe 5 ſhippis wer rayid and digl
Fawnus and his ſone to the Emperour ful
They went, and many a grete man for the
To ſee both in poſſeſſioune, as their coven
Beryn firſt was ſeſid in the ſhippis fyve,
And Fawnus had the releſe, and bare it to
And eche held them payde, and Rame be
For ſhe had conquerd thing that cauſid m
Now leve I Fawnys and his wyff, and of the g
Of Beryn I wol ſpeke, and alſo of his cha
When lodiſmen and maryneris in al thin

thre dayis inceſſantly the derknes among them was,
at no ſhipp myght ſe othir; wherfor full oft Alas!
ey ſeyd, and to the high God they made their preyere,
at he wold of his grace them govern and ſtere
that their lyvis myght yſavid be,
they were cleen in diſpeyr, becauſe they myght nat ſe
e loder, wherby theſe ſhipmen ther courstoke ech-
at laſt, the ferth dey, making thus hir mone, [one.
ie dey gan clere; and then ſuch wynd aroſe
iat blew their ſhippis elſwhere then was their firſt purpoſe.
ie tempeſt was ſo huge and ſo ſtrong alſo,
iat wele was hym that coude bynde or ondo
iy rope within the ſhipp that longit to the craft;
'ery man ſhewid his connyng to fore the ſhipp and bafft. [fore,
ie wynd a wook the ſee to braſt, it blew ſo greſly
iat Beryn and all his company of ſynnys las and mere
he man round about ſhroff hymſelf to othir, [thir;
ad put in Godd'is gowernaunce lyf, ſhipp, and ſtro-
ir ther was ſhippis meyne, for owght they coud hale,
hat myght abate of the ſhipp the thiknes of a ſcale:
ie wedir was ſo fervent of wynd and eke of thundir
iat every ſhipp from othir was blowe of ſight a-ſondir,

For it is but grace of God yt
A maryner anoon wyth that
Styed into the top caſtell, an
glad:
Sir, he ſeith, beth mery; yet
Saff and ſound ſailing, as ye
And eke, Sir, ferthermore, I
Let draw our corſe ſtward, th
Pleiſ dbeGod! quod Beryn, t
We have no nede to dout w
For there n'ys wythin our ſt
tioune,
But al trew marchaundiſe;
Stere onys into the coſtis as
When our ſhippis be ycom, t

That I my ſelf aloon walk into the towne,
And here and ſe both her and there, upward and
And enquere fullich of their governaunce. [downe,
What ſey ye Sirs? woll ye ſent to this ordenaunce?
All they accordit well therto and held it for the beſt,
For thus yf it be profirabill we mowe abide and reſt,
And yf it be othirwiſe the rathir ſhall we go,
For aftir that the ſpede we woll work and do.
But nowe nowe ye her right a wondir thing!
In all the world wyde ſo fals of their lyvyng
Was no pepill undir ſone, ne none ſo diſſeyvabill,
As was the pepill of this town, ne more unſtabill,
And had a curſed uſage of ſotill ymaginacioune,
That yf ſo wer the ſhippis of any ſtraunge nacioune
Were com into the port, anoon they wold them hide
Within their own howſis, and no man go ne ryde
In no ſtrete of alle the town; aſcaunce that they wer
lewde, [ſhrewde,
And coud no ſkill of marchandiſe, a ſkill it was a
As ye ſhull here aftir of their wrong and falſhede;
But yit it fill, as worthy was, oppon their own hede.
Beryn arayd hym freſhly, as to a Marchand longith,
And ſet hym on a palfrey wel be ſey and hongit;
And a page rennyng by his hors fete:
He rode endlong the town, but no man coud he meet;
The dorrys wer yclofid in both too ſidis,
Wherof he had merveil: yet ferthermore he ridis,

Of all the town throughout, and ...
With trechery and gile, as doith ſom freri
Right ſo muſt he part with his comperis.
Beryn light down on his hors, and inward
And fond the good man of the houſe pleyi
With his neyghbour, as trewe as he, that d
faſt by.
But as ſone as this burgeyſe on Beryn caſt
Sodenly he ſtert up, and put the chefs by
And toke Beryn by the hond, and feyd
tho;
Benedicite! what manere wynd hath y
Now wold to God I had wherof, or co
chere!
But we ſhull lowe my good wyll, and ta
... ſuffir thes

Lord God! ſeyd this burgeyſe, I thank this ilk dey
That I ſhuld ſee yew hole and ſound here in my contray;
And yf ye liſt to tell the cauſe of yewr comyng,
And yf he have nede to any manere thing,
And it be in my power, and thoughe I ſhuld it ſech,
It ſhuld go right wonder ſtreyte, I ſey yew ſikerlich,
But yee it had in haſte, therwith yew pleſe,
For now I ſee yew in my houſe my hert is in grete eſe.
The todir burgeyſe roſe hym up for to make rouſe,
And axid of his felaw, that lord was of the houſe,
Whens is this worſhipfull man? with wordis hend and low,
For it ſemith by the manere that ye hym ſhuld knowe,
And have ſey hym tofore this tyme. I have ſene, quod the todir,
Ye ywis an xx ſithis, and right as to my brodir
wol do hym pleſaunce in al that evir I can,
or trewlich in his contray he is a worſhipful man:
orſoth, Sir, and for yeur love, a thouſand in this town
old do hym worſhip, and be right feyne and bown
pleſe hym, and avail to have thonk of you:
oot wele, God them yeld, ſo have they oft er nowe.
I aroſe up therwithall, and with his felaw ſpak
ich manere mater that fayld nevir of lakk.
hen their counſell was ydo this burgeyſe preyd his fere
a down be Deryn, and do hym ſport and chere,

And in the while I wol ſe to his hors,
For every gentil hert, afore his own eors
Deſirith that his riding beſt be ſervid and ydight
Rathir than hymſelf; wherfor wyth all my myght
I woll have an eye therto; and ſich parte wyyn
Wich tonne or pipe is beſt and moſt fyne.
Beryn was all abaſhid of his ſoden chere,
But nethirles the burgeyſe fat hym ſomwhat nere,
And preyd hym of his gentilnes his name for to tell,
His contrey and his lynnage: and he anſwer'd ſnell,
Berinus I am ynamid, and in Rome ybore,
And have fyve ſhippis of myn own, las and more,
Full of marchaundiſe, ligging tofore the town;
But much marvaile have I the good man is ſo boun
To ſerve me and pleſe, and how it might be.
Sir, ſeyd the burgeyſe, no mervelle it is to me,
For many a tyme and oft, I cannot fey how lome,
He hath be in yeur marchis; and as I trow in Rome
Alſo he was ybore, yf I ne ly ſhall.
Yf it be ſo, quod Beryn, no mervelle it is at all
Thoughe he me have yſey, and eke his gentill chere
Previth it all opynly; but be hym that bought me dere
I have ther'of no knowlech, as I am now avyſid.
With that cam in the good man with countenaunce diſgiſid,
And had enqueryd of the child that with Beryn cam
Fro gynnyng to the endyng, and told his maſtris name,

And of Agea his modir, and all thing as it was, [cas;
Wher-through he was ful perfite to anſwere to every
So entryng into the hall the burgeys ſpak anoon,
A! my gentill Beryn, alas! that under ſtonne
Myne own hert Agea, thy modir leff and dere!
Now God aſſoyl hir ſoule, for nevir bettir chere
Had I of frend woman, ne nevir half ſo good.
Benedicite! a Marchaunt comyng ovir flood!
Who brought yew in this purpos, and beth your fadir's heir?
Now by my trew conſcience ryght nygh in diſpeyr
I wax for yeur ſake, for now frendleſe
Ye mowe wele ſey that ye been; but yit for nethirles
Yee mut endure fortune, and hevynes put awey;
Ther is noon othir wiſdom. Alſo yeur ſhippis gey,
That been ycom in ſavete, ought to amend yeur mode,
The wich when we have dyned, I ſwere for by the rood,
We wol ſe them trewly within and eke without,
And have wyne wyth us and drynk al about.
They ſet and wiſh, and fed them, and had wherof plente; [deynte.
The burgeyſe was a ſtuffid man, ther lakkid noon
So when they had ydined the cloth was up ytake,
A cheſe ther was ybrought forth, but tho gan ſorowe to wake.
The ches was all of ivory, the meyne freſh and new,
I pulſhid and ypikid of white, aſure, and blew.

Beryn beheld the cheker, it semed passyng seir;
Sir, quod the burgeyse, ye shul synd her a payr
That woll mate yew trewly in las than half a myle,
And was yseyd of fetilte Beryn to begile.
Now in soth, quod Beryn, it myght wel hap nay,
And n'er I must my shippis se els I wold assay.
What nedith that, quod the burgeyse? trewlich I wol nat glose,
They been nat yit ysetelid ne fixid in the wose;
For I have sent thries litl. ye nithir cam
To wait oppon their governaunce; wher'for let se o
And I shall be the first that shal yew astast. [game,
The meyne wer yset up, and gon to pley fast.
Beryn wan the first, the second, and the third,
And at fourth game' in the ches amyd
The burgeyse was ymatid; but that lust him wele;
And all was doon to bryng hym yn, as ye shul her snel.
Sir, then, seyd Beryn, ye woot well how it is,
Me list no more to pley, for yee know this,
Wher is noon comparisoun, of what thing so it be,
Lust and liking falleth ther: as it semeth me
Ne myth is nat commendabill that ay is ley o side,
But it rebound to the tothir; wherfor tyme is to ryde;
And as many thonkis as I can or may
Of my sport and chere, and also of your pley.
Nay iwis, gentil Beryn, I woot ye wol nat go,
For noritur wol it nat for to part so,
And eke my condicioune; but I ley something
Is no more to pley then who so shoke a rying

Ther no man is wythyn the ryngyng to anſwere;
To ſhete a fethirles bolt almoſt as good me were:
But and ye wold thi next game fom manir wager legg,
And let the trowith on both ſidis be morgage and
That whoſo be ymatid graunt and aſſent [yplegg,
To do the todirs bidding, and whoſo do repent
Drynk all the watir that ſalt is of the ſee.
Beryn belevid that he coud pley betir than he,
And ſodinly aſſentid, with hond in hond aſſurid.
Men that ſtode beſides, ycappid and yhurid.
Wiſt wele that Beryn ſhuld have the wers mes,
For the burgeyſe was the beſt pleyer at ches
Of all the wyde marchis, or many a myle about;
But that ne wyſt Beryn of, ne caſt ther'of no doute:
He ſet the meyne efft ageyn, and toke betir hede
Then he did tofore; and ſo he had nede.
The burgeyſe toke aviſement long on every draught,
So wyth an hour or too Beryn he had ycaught
Somwhat oppon the hipp, that Beryn had the wers.
And albeit his mynd and wyll was for to curs,
Yit muſt he dure his fortune when he was ſo fer ygo;
For *Who is that that Fortune may alway undo?*
And namelich ſtout even in eche ſide
Of *pro* and *contra:* but God help down woll he glide.
But now a word of philoſophy that fallith to my mynd;
Who take hede of the begynnyng what fal ſhall of the end
He leyth a buiſh tofore the gap ther Fortune wold in ryde:
But comynlich yowith forgetith that throughout the world wyde.

ght ſo be Beryn I may wele ſey that conſaillis it
rakid, [rakid
kly to leſe his marchaundiſe, and go hymſelf a
eryn ſtudied in the ches, although it nought availid
The burgeyſe in the mene while with othir men con
ſaillid 1065
To ſech the ſergauntis in the town for thing he ha
So when they com were they walkid to and fro : ado
Up and down in the hall, as ſkaunce they knew nought
And yit of all the purpoſe, wit, and mynd, and thought
Of the untrew burgeyſe, by his meſſengeris 1070
They wer ful enformyd : wherfor with eye, and eris
They lay awaite ful doggidly Beryn to areſt, [and hef
For ther'for they wer aftir ſent, and was their charg
Lord! how ſhuld ofely lomb among wolvis weld, 10
And ſcape unyharmyd? it hath been ſeyn ſeld.
Kepe thy cut now, Beryn, for thow art in the caſ
The hall was full of pepill, the ſerjauntis ſhewid
Beryn kaſt up his hede, and was ful ſore amayid, [r
For then he was in certen the burgeyſe had hy
trayde.
Draw on, ſeyd the burgeyſe; Beryn, ye have th
And every man to othir the covenaunt gan re
The burgeys, whils that Beryn was in hevy t
The next draught attir he toke a roek for n
Beryn ſwat for angir, and was in hevy pligh
And drede full ſore in hert; for wele he w

He ſhuld nat eſcape, and was in high diſtreſs;
And pryvelich in his hert that evir he ſaw the ches
He curſid the day and tyme: but what ayaylid that?
For wele he wiſt then that he ſhuld be matte:
He gan to chaunge his colour both pale and wan.
The burgeyſe ſeith; Comyth nere, ye ſhul ſe this man
How he ſhull be matid with what man me liſt.
He drought and ſeyd, Chek mate. The ſerjauntis wer full preſt,
And ſeſid Beryn by the ſcleve, and ſeyd, Sirs, what think ye for to do,
Quod Beryn to the ſerjauntis, that ye me hondith ſo?
Or what have I offendit? or what have I ſeide?
Trewlich, quod the ſerjauntis, it vaylith nat to breyde;
Wyth us ye muſt a while wher ye wol or no
Toforethe ſteward of this town; aryſe, and trus and go;
And ther it ſhal be openyd how wiſely thow haſt wrought:
This is the end of our tale, make it nevir ſo tought.
Sirs, farith feir, ye have no nede to hale.
Pas forth, quod the ſerjauntis, we wol nat her thy tale.
Yis, Sirs, of yeur curteſy I prey yew of o word:
Although my gentill hooſt hath pleyed with me in
And ywon a wager, ye have naught to doon: [borde,
That is betweenhym and me; ye have nothyng to doon.
The hooſt made an hidouſe cry, in geſolreut the haut,
And ſet his hand in kenebowe, he lakkid nevir a faute.
Weynſt thow, ſeid he to Beryn, for to ſcorne me?
What evir thow ſpeke, or ſtroute, certis it wull nat be.

Of me ſhalt thow have no wrong: pas forth a betir paſe;
In preſence of our ſteward I woll tell my caſe.
Why, hooſt, ſey yee this in erneſt or in game? 1110
Ye know my contray, and my modir, my lynnage,
and my name;
And thus ye have yſeyd me X ſith on this dey.
Ye, what though I ſeyd ſo? I know wele it is nay:
Ther lyth no more ther'to. But anothir tyme 1114
Leve me ſo much the les when thow comeſt by me;
For all that evir I ſeyd was to bryng the in care,
And now I have my purpoſe I woll nothyng the ſpare.
Thus janglyng to ech othir, endenting every paſe,
They entrid both into the hall ther the ſteward was:
Evandir was his name, that fotill was, and ſo fell,
He muſt be well avifed tofore hym ſhuld tell. 1121
Anothir burgeyſe wyth hym was, provoſt of the cete,
That Hanybaid was yclepid, but of fotilte
He paſſid many anothir, as ye ſhul here ſone.
Berynus hooſt gan to tell al thyng as it was doon 1125
Fro gynnyng to the endyng, the wordis wyth the dede,
And how they made their covenaunt, and wager how
they leyd. [tale,
Now Beryn, quod the ſteward, thow haſt yherd this
How and in what manere thou art ybrought in bale;
Thow muſt do his byddyng, thow maiſt yn no wyſe
Or drynk all the watir that falt is in the ſee: [ſlee,
Of theſe too thingis thow muſt cheſe the toon;
Now be well avyſid, and ſey thy will anoon.

: ſhuld nat eſcape, and was in high diſtreſs;
ıd pryvelich in his hert that evir he ſaw the ches
: curſid the day and tyme: but what ayaylid that?
r.wele he wiſt then that he ſhuld be matt: 1085
: gan to chaunge his colour both pale and wan.
ıe burgeyſe ſeith; Comyth nere, ye ſhal ſe this man
ıw he ſhull be matid with what man me liſt.
: drought and ſeyd, Chek mate. The ſerjauntis wer
full preſt,
ıd ſeſid Beryn by the ſcleve, and ſeyd, Sirs, what
think ye for to do, 1090
ıod Beryn to the ſerjauntis, that ye me hondith ſo?
what have I offendit? or what have I ſeide?
ewhich, quod the ſerjauntis, it vaylith nat to breyde;
yth us ye muſt a while wher ye wol or no
fore the ſteward of this town; aryſe, and trus and go;
ıd ther it ſhal be openyd how wiſely thow haſt
wrought: 1096
is is the end of our tale, make it nevir ſo tought.
s, farith feir, ye have no nede to hale.
, forth, quod the ſerjauntis, we wol nat her thy tale.
ı, Sirs, of yeur curteſy I prey yew of o word: 1100
:hough my gentill hooſt hath pleyed with me in
d ywon a wager, ye have naught to doon: [borde,
atisbetween hym and me; ye have nothyng to doon.
e hooſt made an hidouſe cry, in geſolreut the haut,
d ſet his hand in kenebowe, he lakkid nevir a faute.
:ynſt thow, ſeid he to Beryn, for to ſcorne me? 1105
ıat evir thow ſpeke, or ſtroute, certis it wol nat be.

Ther lyth no more ther'to. But anothir ty
Leve me ſo much the les when thow come
For all that evir I ſeyd was to bryng the ir
And now I have my purpoſe I woll nothyn
Thus janglyng to ech othir, endenting ev
They entrid both into the hall ther the ſte
Evandir was his name, that ſotill was, an
He muſt be well avifed tofore hym ſhuld
Anothir burgeyſe wyth hym was, provoſt
That Hauy caid was yclepid, but of ſotilt
He paſſid many anothir, as ye ſhul here ſ
Berynus hooſt gan to tell al thyng as it was
Frogynnyng to the endyng, the wordis wy
And how they made their covenaunt, and
they leyd.

thir he bargeynyd or no, and ſeyd thus: Beryn,
frend, [an end
marchaundiſe is feir and good, now let us make
liſt; I can no more; yee knowith how it is. [mys,
, of ſhort let tuk them yn, methinkith I ſey nat
:hen yeur meyne and ye, and I, to my houſe ſhall
we go,
of the marchaundiſe I ſaw I wol nat part therfro;
: of the beſt of that ye find there 1191
oghout the long houſe, ther ſhall no man yeu dere,
therwith ſhall yeur ſhippis be fillid all fyve:
ſey no betir: yf ye liſt to dryve
bargeyn to the end counſellith with yeur men;
nat long tary, I muſt nedis hen. 1196
clepid his meyne counſell for to take;
is firſt mocioune was of the woo and wrake,
ll the tribulacioune, for pleying at ches,
he had; every dele his ſhame and his dures 1200
oynt to poynt. and how it ſtode, he told how it
was,
hen he axid counſaill what beſt was in the caſe,
aunge with the burgeyſe or els for to leve?
man ſeyd his aviſe; but al that they did meve
r to long a tale for to tell it here: 1205
mally, at end, they cordit al in fere
the chaunge ſhuld ſtond, for as the caſe was fall
held it clerely for the beſt, and went forth wyth-
all

to Hanybald's plaſe.
t ſotill fallaed
ir, and higheſt trechery,
t hymſelf to this com-

eſe, as thy covenaunt is.
on, and fond amys;
ıy man might ſe
nd tymbir made of tre;
all thing that was there;
is men away it bere.
that ful was ther'tofore
thought he, I am lore,
th well his hert
ıtward gan he ſtert
te both his lippis,
his own ſhippis,
h.al that evir he myght,
as hym thought verrey
ſt, for 3cc men, [right.
re the good then, [tofore
nnybald, that pryvelich
l be out ybore.
r myght no man hym let;
gh, and with Beryn met:
knowiſt well and fyne.
the good is myne.
? thow haſt ther nowght
l thow myne alſo. [to do,

For yit ſaw I nevir man that was of thy manere;
Sometyme thou wolt avaunte, and ſome tyme arere:
Now thow wolt, and now thow n'olt. Wher ſhul men
the fynd?
Now ſey oon, and ſith anothir. So variant of mynd
Saw I nevir tofore this dey man ſo variabill.
Sith I the fynd in ſuch plyte, our bargen for to ſtabill,
We woll tofore the ſteward, ther we both ſhull have
Nay, forſoth, quod Beryn. Yis treulich the tite, [right.
Quod Hanybald, wher thou wolt or no; and ſo I the
charge
As provoſt: know that yf me liſt my warant is ſo large,
And thow make any diffence, to bynym thy lyffe.
Take thyn hors; it gaynyth nat for to make ſtryffe.
So wyth ſorowfull hert Beryn toke his hors,
And ſoftly ſeyd to his men, Of me, quod he, no fors,
But wend to yeur ſhippis; I wol com when I may;
Ye ſeth well everichone I may no bet awey.
Now here by this ſame Tale both fre and bond
Mow ſele in their wittis; and eke ondirſtonde
That *Litill vailith wyſdom or els governaunce*
Ther Fortune evir werrith, and eke Hap and Chaunce:
Or what availeth bounte, bewte, or riches,
Frendſhip, or ſotilte, or els hardines,
Gold, good, or catell, wyt, or bylynage,
Lond, or lordis ſervice, or els high peerage?
What may all this avayle ther Fortune is a foo?
I wis right litill, or nevir a dele: full oft it fallith ſo.

So, ſhortly to pas ovir, they fill to ſuch an end
That Beryn ſhuld have day ageyn a morowe, and ſo to wend
He ſet hym in ful purpoſe to his ſhippis ward: [ward:
But yit or he cam ther he fond the paſſage hard;
For how he was begiled throughout all the towne
Ther and ther a coupill gan to ſpeke and to roune;
And every man his purpoſe was to have parte [art.
With falſnes, and with ſotiltees; they coud noon othir
Beryn rode forth in his wey, his page ran hym by,
Full ſore adred in hert, and caſt about his eye
Up and down, even long the ſtrete, and for angir ſwet,
And er he had riden a ſtone's caſt a blynd man with him met,
And ſpak no word, but ſeſid hym faſt by the lap,
And cried out and harowe, and nere hym gan to ſtap.
All for nought, quod this blynd; what! wenyſt thow for to ſkape? [be japed.
Beryn had thought to prik forth, and thought it had
The blynd man caſt awey his ſtaff, and ſet on both his hondis; [londis,
Nay, thow ſhalt nat void, quod he, for all thy rich
Tyll I of the have reſon, lawe, and eke righte,
For trewlich I may wit it the that I have loſt my ſight.
So for ought that Beryn coud othir ſpeke or prey
He myght in no wyſe pas; ful ſore he gan to may,
And namelich for the pepill throng hym ſo about,
And eche man gan hym hond, and ſeyd, Without doute

Ye muſt nedis ſtond, and reſt, and bide the lawe,
Be ye nevir ſo grete a man. So wold I wondir fawe,
Quod Beryn, yf yee had cauſe, but I know noon.
No, thow ſhalt know or thow go thow haſt nat al ydoon,
The blynd man ſeyd to Beryn. Tell on then, quod he.
Here is no place to plete, the blynd man ſeyd age,
Alſo we have no juge here of autorite;
But Evandir the ſteward ſhall deme both the and me.
When I my tale have told, and thow haſt made anſwere,
By that tyme men ſhull know how thow canſt the
Now, ſoveren God! I thank the of this ilk dey; [clere.
Then I may preve the, be my lyve, of word and eke of fay
Fals, and eke untrewe of covenaunt thow haſt ymakid.
But litill is thy charge now though that I go nakid
That ſometyme wer partinere, and rekenydſt nevir yit;
But thou ſhalt bere or we depart ther'of a litill witt,
For, aftir comyn feyng, Evir atte ende
The trowith woll be previd how ſo men evir trend.
Thus they talkid to eche othir tyl they com into the
And wer yentrid in the hall ther the ſteward was. [plaſe,
The blynd man firſt gan to ſpake: Sir Steward, for Godd'is ſake
Herith me a litill while, for her I have ytake
He that hath do me wrong moſt of man of mold;
Be my help, as law woll, for hym that Judas ſold.

Ye know wele that oft tyme I have to yow ypleynid
How I was betrayed, and how I was ypeynid,
And how a man some tyme and I our yen did chaunge;
This is the same persone, though that he make it
straunge:
I toke them hym but for a tyme, and wenyd trewly
Myne to have yhad ageyn; and so both he and I
Were ensurid uttirlich, and was our both will;
But for myne the bettir were wrongfullich and ille
He hath them kept hidirto, wyth much sorowe and
pyne
To me, as ye wele knowith; because I have nat myn
I may nat se with his; wher'for me is ful woe:
And evirmore ye seyd that ye myght nothing do
Without presence of the man that wrought me
unquert:
Now sith he is tofore you now let hym nat aster
For many tyme and oft yee behete me
And he myght be take he shuld do me gre.
Sith ye of hym be sesid, howevir so yee tave,
Let hym nevir pas tyl I myn yen have.
Beryn, quod Evandir, herist thow nat thy sel
How sotilly he pletith, and ware by eche halv
Beryn stode all muet, and no word he spake
And that was tho his grace; ful sone he had
And he had myssеyd onys, or els yseyd nay
For then he had been negatyff, and undo s
For they were grete Sevilioun, and usid
Where evirmore affirmatyf shuld preve

Wher for they wer so querelouse of all myght com in
mynd, [wold fynd
Though it wer nevir in dede ydo; such matere they
To benym a man his good through som manir gile;
For the blynd man wist right wele he shuld have lost
his whyle 1340
To make his pleyt on Beryn, and suyd oppon his good;
For shippis and eke marchaundise in a balaunce stode;
Ther for he made his chalenge his yen for to have,
Or els he shuld for them syne yf he wold them have,
And ligg for them in hostage tyll the synaunce cam:
This was all the sotilte of the blynd man. 1346
Beryn stode all muët, and no word he spak.
Beryn, quod Evander, lest thow be ytake
In defaute of answere thou myghtist be condempnyd,
Be right wele avysid, sith thou art examenyd. 1350
Sir, seyd Beryn, it wold litill availe
To answere thus aloon without good counsaill;
And also ferthermore, full litill I shuld be levid,
Whatevir I answerd, thus stonyd and reprevid;
And eke my wit doith faille; and no wondir is; 1355
Wher for I wold prey yew, of yewr gentilnes,
To graunt me dey tyll to morowe I might be avysid
To answere forth, wythothir that on me been surmy-
Deperdeux! quod the steward, I graunt we lit be so. [sid.
Beryn toke his leve, and hopid to pas and go: 1360
But as sone as Beryn was on his hors ryding
He met a woman and a child wyth sad chere comyng,

That toke hym by the reyn, and held hym wondir faſt,
And ſeid, Sir, voidith nat yit, vailith nat to haſte;
Ye mow in no wyſe ſcape; ye muſt nedis abyde;
For though ye liſt to know me nat, yit lien by yeur ſide
I have ful many a tyme, I can nat tell yew lome.
Come toſore the ſteward, ther ſhall ye here yeur dome
Of thing that I ſhall put on yew, and no word for to ly:
To leve me thus aloon it is yeur villany. 1370
Alas the day and tyme that evir I was yeur make!
Much have I endurid this too yere for yeur ſake;
But now it ſhall be know who is in the wronge.
Beryn was all abaſhid, the pepill ſo thik thronge
About him in eche ſide: for ought that he couth peyn
He muſt to the ſteward of ſyne fors ageyn. 1376
Now ſhull ye here how ſotillich this woman gan hir tále
In preſence of the ſteward. With colour wan and pale
Petouſly ſhe gan to tell; and ſeid, Sir, to yew
Full oft I have compleynyd in what manere and how
My child'is fadir left me, by myſelf aloon, 1381
Wythout help or comforte, as grete as I myght goon
Wyth my ſon here and his, that ſhame it is to tell
The penury that I have yhad, that afors fell
I muſt nedis myne aray, wher me liſt or lothe, 1385
Or els I muſt have beggit for to fynd us both;
For there was nevir woman I leve, as I ges,
For lak of hede of lyvelode that lyvid in more diſtres
Then I my ſelf for oft tyme for lak of mete and drink;
And yit I trow no creature was feyner for to ſwinke

My lyff to ſuſtene: but as I mut nede
Above all othir thingis to his child take hede,
That wondir is and mervaile that I am alyve;
For the ſokyng of his right as it were a knyve
It ran into my hert; ſo low I was of mode
That well I woot in certen with percell of my blode
His child I have ynoriſhid; and that is by me ſeen;
For my rede colour is turnid into grene:
And he that cauſe is of all here he ſtondith by me;
To pay for the foſteryng methinkith it is tyme.
And ſith he is my huſbond, and hath on me no rowith,
Let hym make amendis in ſaving of his trowith.
And yf he to any word onys can ſay nay
Lo! here my gage, al redy to preve all that I ſey.
The ſtewarde toke the gage, and ſpak in ſoft wyſe;
Of this petouſe compleynt a mann'ys hert may griſe,
For I know in percell hir tale is nat all leſe,
For many a time and oft this woman that here is
Hath ybe tofore me, and pleynid of hir greffe,
But wythout a party hir cauſe myght nat preffe.
Now thou art here preſent that ſhe plenyth on
Make thy defence now, Beryn, as wele as thow con.
Beryn ſtode all muët, and no word he ſpak.
Beryn, quod the ſteward, doiſt thow ſclepe or wake?
Sey onys oon or othir: is it ſoth or nay
As ſhe hath declarid? tell on ſaunce delay.
Lord God! quod Beryn, what ſhuld it me availe
Among ſo many wiſe, without right good counſaill,

I graunt wele, q...
Thow getist no lenger tyme pleyn...
Beryn toke his leve; his hert gan to f
For pure verrey anguyssh; and no me
And who is that that n'old and he wer
For al his trist and hope in eny worldlic
Was cleen from hym passid, save foro
For body, good, and catell, and lyff, he
So was his hert ywoundit for angir an
Beryn passyd sofrly, and to his hors g
And when he was without the gatis he
And coud noon othir countenaunce
he seyd,
Preciouse God in heven! how fals
I trow no man alyve stont in wers
...ll is for my synne, and for m

That I n'ote whider ryde nethir up ne down,
Ther been so many devillis dwellyng in this town,
And so ful of gile and trechery also,
That well I woot in certeyn they woll me ondo.
Now wold to God in hevyn what is my best rede!
He toke his hors to his page, and thus to hym he sayd,
Lede my hors to shipward, and take it to some man,
And I woll go on foot as pryvely as I can,
And assay yf I may in eny manere wise
Escape unarrested more in such manner wise.
The child toke his maistir's hors, and last hym there
Walking forth on foot, making oft his moon; [aloon,
And in his most musing, I can nat sey how lome,
He wosshid nakid as he was bore he had be in Room.
And no mervaill was it as the case stode,
For he drad more to lese his eyen than he did his shippis or his good.
Now yee that listith to dwell and here of aventure,
How petously Dame Fortune, Beryn to inure,
Turnyth hir whele about in the wers side; [ride.
With hap of sorowe and anguyssh she gynyth for to
Beryn passid toward the strond ther his shippis were,
But yee mow ondirstond his hert was ful of fere;
Yet nethirles he sat hym down softly on a stall,
Semy'ryse for sorowe, and lenyd to the wall
For turment that he had, so wery he was and feynt,
And to God above thus he made his pleynt:

A cachepoll ſtode beſidis, his name w
And herd all the wordis, and knew a
How Beryn was turmented both wi
It was yſprong through the town; ſ
ſenſid
How he hym would engyne as he h
And had araid hym ſotillich as m
cioune,
In a mantell wyth the liſt, with fals
And a ſtaff in his honde, as though
And drow hym toward Beryn, and
nere:
The high God of heven, that althin
Bles yew, gentil Sir, for many an l
Me thinkith that ye have, and no

And who be in that plage that man is incurabill,
For conſequent comyth aftir ſekenes abominabill;
And ther'for, Sir, diſkeverith yewe, and be nothing adrad.
Graant mercy! Sir, quod Beryn, ye ſeme trew and ſad;
But o thing lyith in myn hert, I n'ote to whom to truſt,
For tho that dyned me to dey ordeyned me to areſt.
A Sir! be yew that man? of yew I have yherd.
Gentill Sir, doutith nat, ne be nothing aferd
Of me, for I ſhall counſell yew as well as I can,
For trewlich in the cete dwellith many a fals man,
And uſyn litil els but falſhode, wrong, and wyle,
And how they might ſtraungers with trechery begile:
But ye ſhul do right wiſely ſomewhat be my counſail.
Speke with the ſteward; that may you moſt availl;
For ther is a comyn byword, yf ye it herd havith,
Wele ſetith be his peny that the pound ſavith.
The ſteward is a covetouſe man, that long hath diſirid
A knyff I have in keping, wherwith his hert I wirid;
Shall be yew to help, in covenaunte that yee
Shall give me five mark yeur treu frend to be.
The knyff is feir, I tell yew; yit nevir tofore this day
Myght the ſteward have it for aught he coud prey,
The wich ye ſhuld gyve hym, the betir for to ſpede,
And behothe hym 2c*l.* to help yew in yeur nede;
And yf he grauntith, truſtith wele ye ſtond in good pligh[t];
For betir is then leſe all the las the more quyt.

Beryn thanne ...

With hond in hond enſurid, and a
Beryn thought noon othir, al that
Machaign hym comfortid, talkyn
And paſſid forth ſtylly toward the
Beryn and Machaign; but Beryn b
And truſt much in his felawe to h
But or they departed were they h
Of no manir comfort, as ye ſhull l
For as ſone as Machaigne toſore
He fill plat to the erth: a grevous
He made; and ſeyd, Sir Steward
Ageyns this fals treytour that ſte
Let take of hym good hede, els h
Now mercy gode Steward, for ye
... Melan pleyn to yo

When Beryn herd thefe wordis he kift down his hede;
Allas! he thought in hert, alas! what is my rede?
And would fayn have voidit, and outward gan to ftapp,
But Machaigne arofe and fefid by the lapp:
Nay, thow fhalt nat void, he feid; my tale is nat ydo;
For be trowith of my body yf thou fcapidift fo
I fhuld nevir have mery whils I wer on lyve,
And fet hond faft on Beryn's othir fcleve,
And feid, Good Sir Steward, my tale to the end
I prey ye wold here, for wend how men wend
There may no man hele murdir, but it will out at laft:
The fame knyff my fadir bere when he of contre paft
Let ferch wele this felon, ther ye fhul hym find;
I know the knyff wele inough, it is nat out of my mynd:
The cotelere dwellith in this toun that made the fame
And for to preve the trowith he fhall be here as blyve.
Beryn fwat for angir, his hert was full of fere;
He toke the knyff to the fteward or he ferchid were.
The fteward onto Beryn, My frend, lo! quod he,
And thow think the well about this is foule plee:
I can know noon othir but thow muft or thow go
Yeld the body of Melan and his good alfo.
Now be well avyfid ageyn to morowe day, to fay.
Then fhalt thou have thy jugement; ther is no more
When Beryn fro the fteward thus departid was,
And was without the gate, he lokid oppon the plafe,
And curfid it wondir bitterly in a fervent ire,
And wifhid many tymes it had been a fire;

For yit in all my lyve ſithe
Had I nevir wyl for to lern
Foly I hauntid it evir, ther
And now he hath ypaid m
dett;
For whils I had tyme wyſd
But I drow me to foly and
But had al myne own wyll,
For I was nevir chaſtiſid; b
Betith me to ſore; the ſtrok
For theſe devillis of this tov
To ſclee my body to have m
morowe;
Now wold to God I wer in
I was iwis to much a fole; f

Then eny wit or governaunce, for them too I did hate;
And though I wold be at oon now it is to late.
O myghtfull God in heven! wher was evir man
That wrought hymſelf more foly than I my ſelf did than?
A curſid be the tyme that I out of Rome went!
That was my fadir's right heir of lyvelode and of rent,
And al the riall lordſhip that he hath in the town.
Had I had wit and grace, and hold me low and boun,
It wer my kynd now among my baronage
To hauk and to hunt, and eke to pley and rage
With feir freſhe ladies, and daunce when me liſt;
But now it is to late to ſpeke of Had I wiſt.
But I fare like the man that for to ſwele his flyes
He ſtert into the bern, and aftir ſtre he hies,
And goith about the wallis with a brennyng waſe,
Tyll it was at laſt that the leem and blaſe
Entrid into the chynys where the wheate was,
And kiſſid ſo the eveſe that brent was all the plaſe;
But firſt in the begynnyng, tyll feer ſmote in the raftris,
He toke no manere kepe, and thought of nothing aftir
What perell there myght fall: ne more did I ywis,
That wold forſake myn honour for the unkyndnes
Of Rame; that was my ſtepmodir; for yf I ſhall nat ly
They beth foure; wherfor the more wiſely
I ſhuld have wrought, had I had wit, and ſuffrid for a tyme,
And aftir com to purpoſe wel inowghe of myne.

The knyff that was me take,
And yit it grevith mine hert
Of myn own pepill, that no
I wote wele aftir pleding ryg
To ſuſtene their lyvis: I trow
And peraventur lightly ſtond
Of me it is no fors though I b
But it is dole and pete that th
That hath nought aſervid but
And when that Beryn in this w
A crepill he ſaw comyng with
Oppon a ſtilt ondir his kne bo
And a crouch undir his army
ſkramyd;
Alas! quod this Beryn, ſhall I

And had yraught nere hond Beryn by the fleve:
Beryn turnyd as an hare, and gan to ren blyve;
But the cripill knew betir the paths fmale and grete
Then Beryn, fo tofore hym he was, and gan hym mete.
When Beryn faw it vaylid naught to renne ne to lepe,
What for dole and and angoyfh and word myght he
fpeke,
But ftode ftill amafid, and ftarid faft about:
The cripill began to fpeke; Sir, to drede or to dout
Of me wold ye right light, and ye knew myne hert,
So where ye like well or ill fro me fhall ye nat part
Tyl I have tretid with yew, and ye with me alfo,
Of all yeur fedeh happis, yeur myfcheff, and yeur wo;
For by the tyme that I have knowleeh of yeur cafe,
Yeur rennyng, and yeur trotting into an efy pas,
I fhall turn or that we twyn, fo yo aftir my ftole
Woll do, and as I rede yew; for yee wer a fole
When ye cam firft alonde, ye had met with me,
For I wold have enfenfid yew all the iniquite
Of thes fals marchauntes that dwellen in this town,
And outid all your chaffare without gruch or groun;
For had ye dwellid within yeur fhippis, and hat go
them among,
Then had ye been undaungerid, and quyt of all their
On yew that been furmyfid through fals fuggeftionne.
Beryn gan to figh, unneth he might foune
Saf o word or tweyn, and Mercy was the firft,
Preying with all his hert that he myght have his reft.

1660

1670

1679

I woll ſhew yew all ifere, a
And put it in yewr grace tc
And in the meen while tha
The crypill nyghid hym ner
by the lap;
And as ſone as Beryn knew
He unlacyd his mantell for
And pryvelich ovir his ſhul
And had levir leſe his mant
The cripill all perceyvid, ar
Of his nethir ſurcote. Alas!
Thought Beryn by hymſelf
There helpith naught ſave
ſcleve to rent
Beryn gan; to ſcappe he ſp

He had; and manly and iuly was he,
And Geffrey was his name yknow in that contre.
Alas! thought this Geffrey, this man hath grete drede
Of me, that by my power wold help hym in his nede:
I wis though he be nyce, untaught and unwiſe,
I woll nat for his foly leve myne enpryſe;
And lept aftir Beryn, and that in right good ſpede.
Beryn was ſo ſore agaſt he toke no maner hede
To look onys bakward tyll he to the watir cam,
Then lokid he behynd and ſaw Sir Clekam
Commaund wondir faſt with ſtaff and with his ſtilt.
Allas! thought Beryn, I now am yſpilt,
For I may no ferthir without I wold me droune,
I n'ote wich were the betir, or go ageyn to toune.
Geffrey was ſo nigh com that Beryn myght nat fle:
Good Sir, quod this Geffrey, why do yee void me?
For by heven quene, that bare Criſt in hir barme,
But right as to my ſelf I woll yew no more harme.
Sittith down here by me oppon this ſee ſtronde,
And yf ye drede any thing clepe yewr men to londe,
And let them be here with us all our ſpeche tyme,
For I woll nat ſeyn oon word, as makers doon to ryme,
But counſell yew as prudently as God woll ſend me grace:
Take comfort to yew, and herk a litill ſpaſe.
And when that Beryn had yherd his tale to the end,
And how goodly as Geffrey ſpak, as he were his frende,

And by nete me [illegible]
But inward it was contrary their intell
Whei for the blame is les, though I ſuſpt
I have of yewr wordis, le ſt othir be yew
For I n'ote whom to truſt by God omni
Yit nethirles yf your will is to com into
I wolle fomwhat do by yeur rede how ſ
Then, quod Geffrey, if it be ſo that I in
Entir into your ſhippis, and yew help
ſtere,
That yee ageyn yewr adverſaryes ſhul
And gyve yow ſuch counſell to bate do
And that yee wynne in every pleyt
more
As they purpoſe to have of yew; y
[illegible] have amendis for their iniqui

Ful many, and turmented wers then wer yee,
And endurid for my trowith much adverſite,
For I wold in no wife ſuffir their falſhedes,
For in all the world ſo corrupt of their dedis
Been noon men alyve, I myght ryght well avow,
For they ſet all their wittis in wrong all that they mowe;
Wher'for full many a tyme the grettiſt of them and I
Have ſtonden in altercatioune for their trechery;
For I had in valew in trew marchaundiſe
A M. *l.* all have they take in ſuch maner wiſe:
So ferforth to ſave my blode no longer myght I dryve dure;
For drede of wors thus thought I my ſelf to disfigure,
And have among them 12 yere go right in this plighte,
And evir have had in memory how I myght them quyte;
And ſo I hope now, as ſotill as they be,
With my wit engine them and help yew and me.
My lymes been both hole and ſound, me nedith ſtilt ne crouch.
He caſt aſyde them both, and lepe oppon an huche
And adown ageynes, and walkid to and fro,
Up and down, within the ſhip, and ſhewid his hondis tho,
Stretching forth his fingris in ſight and all about
Without knot or knor, or eny ſign of goute,
And dyght them eſſt ageyns right disſetirly,
Som to *ride ech* othir, and ſom awewardwyy.

Geffrey was right myghty, and wele his age
For natur was more ſubſtantiall when tho
Then now in our tyme; for all thing doith
Saff vile and curſid lyving, that growith al
What ſhuld I tell more? But Geffrey ſat by
And Beryn hym beſydis; the Romeyns gar
And mervelled much in Geffrey of his diſg
And Beryn had anothir thought, and ſpak
ſtres.
Now Geffrey, ſeid this Beryn, and I durſt tru
That and ye knewe eny man that is alyve a
That had of diſcrecioune ſo much influence
To make my party good to morowe in my
And delivir me of ſorowe, as ye behote hav
I wold become his legeman, as God my ſou
That wer to much, quod Gefferey; that w
releſe;
But I deſire of othir thing to have yewr pro
That and I bryng yewr enmyes into ſuch a
To make for yewr wrongis to your right high
And ſo declare for you that with you pas ſu
That yee oppon your feith bryng me at Ro
Yf God wol ſend yew wedir and grace to re
Quod Beryn, But I grant yew I wer lewde
But or I fullich truſt yew holdith me excuſid
I woll go counſell with my men leſt they it
Beryn drew aſyde, and ſpak with his meyne
And expreſſid every word in what plight an

That he ſtode from poynt to poynt, and of his fals
areſtis:
His meyne were aſtonyd, and ſtarid forth as beſtis.
Spekith ſom word, quod Beryn, ſith I am betrayd;
Yee have yherd what Geffrey to me hath ſayd.
Theſe Romeyns ſtode alle ſtill; o word ne cowd they
meve;
And eke it paſſid their wittis. Then Beryn gan releve,
And to Geffrey eft ageyn, and mercy hym beſought.
Help me, Sir, quod Beryn, for his love that us bought
Dying on the rood, and wept full tendirly;
For but ye help, quod Beryn, ther is no remedy,
For comfort nethir counſaill of my men have I noon:
Help me, as God yew help, and els I am undoon.
When Geffrey ſaw this Beryn ſo diſtrad, and wept,
Pite into eche veyn of his hert crept.
Allas! quod Geffrey, I might nat do a more ſynful
dede,
I leve by my trowith, then fayl yew in this nede;
Faill me God in heven yf that I yew faill!
That I ſhall do my beſines, my peyn, and my travaile,
To help yew be my power; I may no ferther goo.
Yis, yee behete me more, ſeid Beryn, tho,
That yee wold help me at all that I ſhuld ſtond cler.
Beryn gan to wepe and make wers chere.
Stillith yew, quod Geffrey, for how ſo evir ye tire
More than my power ye ought nat deſire,

In ſigne of trowith of both ...
Eche of us kys othir of our comyn aſſent;
And all was do. And aftirward Beryn cor
They dronk, and then Geffrey ſeid; Sir Ber
Yee mut declare your maters to myne intel
That I may the bet perſeyve all inconvenie
Dout, pro, contra, and ambiguite,
Thorough your declaratioune, and enform
And with the help of our Soveren Lord ce
They ſhall be behynd, and we ſhull have t
For now the tyme approchith for their cu
To be ſomwhat rewardit; and cauſe of ye
Hath my hert yſetlid and fixid them a ny
As trowith woll and reſon, for their trec
For many a man toſore this day they ha
... thorough their fal

The lawes of the cete ſtont in probacy;
They uſen noon enqueſtis the wrongis for to try:
And yf thow haddiſt eny wrong, and woldiſt pleyn the,
And were as trewe a cauſe as eny myght be, 1864
Thow ſhuldiſt nat find o man to bere the witnes,
Though every man in the town knew it more or les;
So burrith they togidir, and holdith with eche othir,
That as to counterplede them, though ye wer my bro-
thir, 1868
I wold gyve yew no counſaill, ne their empechement
In no word to deny, for that wer combirment; [anoon,
For then wer they in the affirmatyf, and wold preve
And to yew that wer negatyff the law wold graunt
So for to plede ageyn them it woll litill availl, [anoon:
And yit to every mann'ys wit it ought be grete mer-
vaile, 1874
For their lawes been ſo ſtreyt, and peynous ordinaunce
Is ſtallid for their falſhede; for this is their fynaunce,
To leſe their lyff for leſing, and Iſope it may knowe,
That lord is riall of the town, and holdith them ſo lowe,
Wherfor they have a cuſtom a ſhrewid for the nonys,
Yf eny of them ſey a thing they cry all at onys, 1880
And ferm it for a ſoth, and it bere any charge; [large;
Thus of the danger of Iſope they kepe them ever at
And therfor wiſdom weer, whoſo might eſchewe,
Nevir to dele with them; for wer it wrong or trewe
It ſhuld litill availl ageyns their falſhedes, 1885
For they been acurſid, and ſo been their dedes,

Seyd Beryn to Geffray, ymmemor
Graunt me grace to morowe, ſo tl
Make ſo myne anſwere, and I ſon
By the that art my counſaill, for c
Reherce me then, quod Geffrey, th
Fro poynt to poynt, al in fere, on
Wherthorough I myght to morow
Now in ſoth, quod Beryn, though
I cannat tell the tenyth part of the
What for ſorowe and angir tha
wrought;
So ſtond I clene deſperat but ye c
Deperdeux! ſeid Geffrey, and I th
Sith I have enſurid the to be of th
And ſo much the more that thou

That thorough his wit, and wiſdom, and his gover-
naunce, [much or praunce,
Who makith a fray ef, or ſtryvith aught, or mel to
Within the ſame cete, that he n'ys take anoon,
And hath his pennaunce forthwith, for pardon uſith
he noon:
For ther n'ys pore ne riche, ne what ſtate he be,
That he ny's undirfote for his iniquite;
And it be previd on hym ther ſhall no gold hym quyte,
Right as the forfete axith moch or lite,
For geyns his commaundment is noon ſo hardy quek,
So hard ſetith he his fote in every mann'ys nek;
For undir ſky and ſterris this day is noon alyve
That coud amend hym in o poynt, al thing to diſtryve.
The 7 Sages of Rome, though al ageyn hym were,
The ſhuld be inſufficient to make his anſwere,
For he can all langagis, Greek, Hebrew, and Latyne,
Caldey, Frenſh, and Lombard, ye know well-fyne,
And all maner that men in bokis write;
In poyſe and philoſophie alſo he can endite:
Civile and canoune, and al maner lawis,
Seneca and Sydrak, and Salamon'ys ſawys,
And the 7 ſciences, and eke law of armys,
Experimentis and pompery, and all maner charmys,
As ye ſhul here aftir er that I depart,
Of his imaginacioun and of his ſotill art;
For he is of age 300 yere and more,
Wherfor of all ſciences he hath the more lore.

In Denmark he was gotten and ybore alſo,
And in Grece ynoriſhed tyl he coud ſpek and go;
Ther was he put to ſcole, and lernyd wondir faſt,
For ſuch was his grace that all othir he paſt:
But firſt in his begynnyng litil good he had,
But lernyd evir paſſyngly, and was wiſe and ſad:
Of ſtature and of ſeture ther was noon hym like
Thorough the lond of Grece though men wold hym ſeke.
A kyng ther was in tho yeris that had noon heir male
Saſſ a doughter, that he lovid as his own ſaal;
Iſope was his ſervaunt, and did hym ſuch pleſaunce
That he made hym his heir, and did hym ſo avaunce
To wed his doughter, and aftir hym to bere crowne,
Thorough prowes and his port ſo low he was and boun;
So as Fortune wold, that was Iſop'is frend,
This worthy king that ſame yere made his carnel end.
That 27 yere is paſſid that Iſope thus hath reigned,
And yit was ther nevir for wrong on hym compleyned
For no jugement that he gaff; yit ſom ageyn hym wylid
A grete part of his pepil, and wold have hym exilid;
But his grete wiſdom, and his manfulnes,
His governaunce, with his bounte and his rightfulnes,
Hath evir yit preſerved hym unto this ilk day,
And woll whyle that he lyvith for aught that men can ſay:
For who hath eny quarel or cauſe for to wonde
Within this ſame cete, quiklich woll he fend,

And it be ſotill matir, to Iſope for to fare,
Fro gynnyng to the end his quarrell to declare; [rowe;
And eve afore, as cuſtom is, peple ſhall be on the mo-
But whoſo ly he ſcapith nat wythout ſhame or ſorowe.
Beryn, thow muſt go thidir, wher thyn enpechement
Shull be ymevid, and therfor pas nat thens
Tyll thou have herd them alle, and report them wele
To me, that am thy counſell, and repeir ſnele.
But ſo rial mancioune as Iſope dwellith in
Ther is noon in the world, ne ſo queynt of gyn,
Wherfore be well aviſid how I enform the
Of the wondir wayis and of the pryvyte
That been wythyn his paleyſe, that thou muſt pas by;
And when thow approchiſt, and art the caſtell nygh,
Blench fro the brode gate, and enter thow nat there,
For ther been men to keep it; yit have thow no fere;
Pas down on the right hond by the caſtell walle
Tyll thow fynd a wyndow, and what ſo the byfall
Entir ther yf thow may, and be nothyng agaſt,
But walk forth in that entre: then ſhalt thow ſee in
A portcolyſe the tofore; pas in boldly [haſte
Tyll thow com to an hall the feyriſt undir ſky:
The wallis been of marbill, yjoynid and ycloſid,
And the pilours of cryſtall. grete and wele propoſid;
The keveryng of bove is of ſelondyn,
And the pament beneth of gold and aſure fyne.
But whoſo paſſith thorough this hall hath nede to ren
Or els he myght be diſware of his own lyve, [thyng.

For ther wythin liith a ſtoon that is ſo hote of kynd
That what thing com for by anoon it woll atend,
As bryght as eny kandeli leem, and conſume anoon;
And ſo wold the hall alſo n'er coldnes of a ſtoon 1996
That is yclepid Dionyſe, that ſet is hym ageyn;
So and thow lepe lightly thou ſhalt have no peyn,
For ethir ſtone in kynd proportioned they be,
Of hete and eke of coldnes of oon equalite. 2000
Thow muſt pas thorough the hall, but tary nat I rede,
For thou ſhult fynd a dur up right afore thyn hede:
When thow art entrid ther, and the dore apaſt,
Whatſo thow ſe ligg or ſtond be thow nat agaſt;
And yf thow drede eny thing do no more ſaff blowe,
But yit I rede the beware that it be ſomwhat lowe;
Ther been to libardis loos and untyed, 2007
If that thy blowing of that othir in eny thing be ſpied
Anoon he rakith on the to ſeſe the by thy pate,
For ther n'ys thing in erth that he ſo much doith hate
As breth of mann'ys mowith; wher'fore refreyn the,
And blow but fair and ſoft, and when that nede be.
When thow art paſſid this hall anoon then ſhalt thow
Into the fayreſt garden that is in Chriſtendom, [com
The wich thorough his clergy is made of ſuch deviſe
That a man ſhall ween he is in Paradiſe, 2016
At his firſt comyng in, for melody and ſong,
And othir glorious thingis and delectabill among,
The wich Tholomeus, that ſomtyme Paynym was,
That of aſtronomy knew ev'ry poynt and caſe, 2020

Did it ſo deviſe, thorough his high connyng,
That ther n'ys beſt in erth ne bird that doith ſing
That he n'ys there in figur in gold and ſylvir fyne,
And mow, as they wer quyk, knaw the ſotill engyr
In mydward of this gardyn ſtant a feir tre
Of al maner levis that undir ſky be,
Yforgit and yfourmit eche in his degre
Of ſylvir and of gold fyne that luſty been to ſee.
This gardeyn is evir grene, and full of May flowri
Of rede, white, and blew, and othir freſh colouris,
The wich been ſo redolent, and ſentyn ſo about,
That he muſt be right lewde therin ſhuld route.
Theſe monſtrefull thingis I deviſe to the
Becauſe thow ſhuldiſt nat of them abaſhid be.
When that thow comyſt there, ſo thow be ſtrong thought,
And do be my counſell, drede the right nought,
For ther beth viii tregetours that this gardyn kepit
Four of them doith waak whils the four ſclepith,
The wich been ſo perfite of nygramance,
And of the art of apparene and of tragetrie,
That they make ſemen as to a mann'ys ſight
Abominabill wormys, that fore ought be afright
The hertieſt man on erth, but he warnyd were
Of the grifly ſightis that he ſhuld ſee there.
Among all othir there is a lyon white
That and he be a ſtraungir he rampith for to bite,

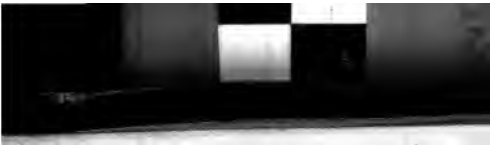
And thow touch oon of them thow
The tre hath ſuch vertu there ſhal
Loke that be the firſt when thow
Then ſhalt thow ſe an entre by the
Thoughe it be ſtreyte tofore, inn
It growith more and more, and as
Yit woll that wey the bryng ther
Into the feyriſt chambir that evir
When thow art there wythyn gov
For there ſhalt thow here al thyn
Opynly declarid in Iſop'is prefent
Report them wele and kepe them
And aftir thy relacioune we ſhall
Thorough help of God above, ſuc
That they ſhull beacombrit, and w
Now in ſoth quod Bern a man

Yit or the cok crow; and ther'for let me ſe
Whils I am out how mery ye can be.
Geffrey toke his leve; but who was ſory tho
But Beryn and his company? for when he was go
Thei had no maner joy, but dout and hevyneś,
For of his repeyryng thei had no ſikernes;
So every man to othir made his compleynt,
And wiſhid that of felony they had been atteynt,
And ſo them thought betir to end hevynes
Then every day to lak brede atte firſt mes;
For when our good is go what ſhall fal of us?
Evir to be their thrallis, and peraventure wers,
To leſe our lyf aftir yf we diſpleſe them ought.
Aftir Geffrey went this was all their thought
Throughout the nyght tyl cokkis gan to ſing;
But then encreſid anguiſhe; their hondis gan to wryng,
And curſid wynd and watir that them brought ther,
And wiſhid many tymes that he had been in bere,
And were apaſſid and entrid into diſpeyr,
In as much as Geffrey did nat repeir:
Eche man ſeyd to othir it myght nat be ynayid
But Geffray had uttirlich falſly them betrayid
Thoroughout all the long nyght.

. . . . . .

Tho went they to counſell a litill tofore the day,
And were all acordit for to ſayl awey;
And ſo them thought betir, and leve their good ther,
Then abyde theroppon, and have more fere.

And cried wondir fait by t
When Beryn herd Geffrey h
And to launch out a bote a
For he may more avayl me
And he be trew and trufty,
But yit ther'of had Beryn
Thefe Romeyns fet in Geff
For they had levir faill fort
Both lyve and goodis: and
They had of this Geffrey;
Talkyng to eche othir, Thi
Geffrey wift well inowghe
And for verry angir he thr
Both ſtilt and eke his crouc
And gan them to comfort,



Wythout more daungir, and yewr wyl be;
For of the lawys her ſuch is the equyte
That *Who purſu othir and his pleynt be wrong*
He ſhall make amendis be he newir ſo ſtrong;
Right as ſhuld the t'odir yf he condempned were,
Right ſo ſhall the pleyntiff right as I yew lere:
And that ſhall preve by them, have ye no doute,
Yit or it be eve right low to yew to loute,
And ſubmit them to yew, and put them in yewr grace
By that tyme I have ymade all my wanlaſe;
And in hope to ſpede well let ſhape us for to dyne.
Geffrey axid watir, and ſith brede and wyne,
And ſeit, It is holſom to breke our faſt betyme,
For the ſteward woll to the court at hour of pryme.
The ſonne gan to ſhyne and ſhope a feir dey;
But for aught that Geffrey coud do or ſey
Theſe Romeyns ſpekyn faſt all the dyner while,
That Geffrey with his ſotill wordis wold them begile.
So when they had ydyned they ryſen up echoone,
And drew them to counſell what was beſt to doon:
Som ſeyd the beſt rede that we do may,
To throw Geffrey ovir the bord, and ſeyll forth our way:
But for drede of Beryn ſom wold nat ſo,
Yit the more party aſſentid wele therto.
Geffrey and Beryn, and worthy Romeyns tweyn,
Stood a part within the ſhip, ſo Geffrey gan to ſeyn,
Beryn, beth aviſid; your men beth in diſtaunce:
Sith ye been her ſoveren put them in governaunce;

For when he ſaw the ſaylis ſtc
Alas! quod this Hanybald, he
To me that am provoſt, and h
All theſe fyve ſhippis undir m
And ran into the town, and n
And chargit all the cetezins t
From o ſtrete tyl anothir, an
And made the trompis blowe
And ſeyd that the Romeyns
Tyl ther wer a thowſand, rat
Men y-armyd cleen, walkyn
When Beryn them aſpied; No
Stont lyf and goodis; doth wi
For all our hope is on the, cor
For we muſt bide aventure, ſt

Then Geffrey was by that tyme they had al ydo.
Hanybald clepid out Beryn, to Mote Hall for to go,
And ſtode upon the brigg with an huge route.
Geffrey was the firſt to Hanybald gan to loute,
And lokid out a fore ſhip: God bles yew! Sir, quod he.
Wher art thow now, Beryn? com forth, behold and ſe,
Her is an huge pepill yrayd and ydight;
All theſe been my children that been in armys bryght;
Yiſtirdey I gat them: is nat mervaill
That they been hidir ycom to be of our counſaill,
And to ſtond by us, and help us in our ple?
A! myne own childryn, bleſſid mut ye be!
Quod Geffrey, with an high voiſe, and had a nyce vi-
And gan to daunce for joy in the fore ſtage. [ſage,
Hanybald lok'd on Geffrey as he wer amaſid,
And beheld his countenaunce, and how he was yraſid,
But evirmore he thought that he was a fole
Naturell of kynde, and had noon othir tool,
As ſemed by his wordis and his viſage both,
And thought it had been foly to wex with hym wroth,
And gan to bord ageyn, and axid hym in game,
Sith thow art our fadir who is then our dame?
And how and in what plaſe were we begete?
Yiſtirday, quod Geffrey, pleyng in the ſtrete
At a gentil game that clepid is the Quek,
A long peny halier was caſt about my nek,
And yknet faſt with a riding knot,
And caſt ovir a perch, and hale along my throte.

For I go nevir without, fare I b
I kiſt them forth all thre, and to
But here now what fill aftir, righ
Ther cam a mowſe lepe forth, an
That puffid out her ſkyn as grete
And in this maner wiſe of the mo
All ye be ycom my children fair a
And yit or it be eve fall woll ſuch
To ſtond in my power yew all to
For and we plede wellto day we ſhal
Hanybald of his wordis hertlich lo
And ſo did all that herd hym, as th
And had grete joy wyth hym for t
For they knew hym noon othir but a
And all this was his diſcrecionne

Of their governaunce all the long day
Tyll their plee wer endit; ſo went they forth their wey
To the court with Hanybald. Then Beryn gan to ſey,
What nedith this, Sir Hanybald, to make ſuch aray,
Sith we been peſe-marchantis, and uſe no ſpoliacioune?
For ſoth, Sir, quod Hanybald, to me was made relacioune
Yee wer in poynt to void; and yef yee had do ſo
Yee had loſt yewr lyvis, without wordis mo.
Beryn held hym ſtyll. Geffrey ſpak anoon;
No les wed then lyvis? Whi ſo, good Sir Jon?
That wer ſomwhat to much as it ſemeth me;
But ye be ovirwiſe that dwell in this cete;
For ye have begonne a thing makith you right bold,
And yit or it be eve as folis ſhull yee be hold:
And eke yee dewyné for ſhipmanny's craft,
And wotith litill what longith to afore the ſhip and baſſt,
And namelich in the dawnyng when ſhipmen firſt arife.
My good frend, quod Hanybald, in a ſcornyng wiſe,
Yee muſt onys enfourm me thorough yowr diſcre-
But firſt yee muſt anſwer to a queſtioune; cioune,
Why make men croſ-ſail in myddis of the maſt?
For to talow the ſhip and feeb more blaſt.
Why goon the yemen to bote ankirs to hale?
For to make them redy to walk to the ale.
Why hale they up ſtonys by the crane lyne?
To make the tempeſt ſeſe and the ſonne ſhyne.

Beryn, quod this Geffrey, retour
What ſhull they do with the at
them pleyn.
Plede thy caſe thy ſelve right as t
To bide with the ſhippis my pur
Nay, forſoth, quod Hanybald, t
lond,
Wee have no ſolis but the; and to
For thow art wife in law to pled
That can I betir, quod Geffrey,
What feyſt thow therto, Beryn!
Hanybald likid his wordis wele, t
Beryn made hym angry, and ſigh
For Geffrey hym had enfourmid
How he hym ſhuld govern all t

For tho the marchandiſe was more then half myne,
And ſith that thow com hidir thow takiſt all for thyne.
But yit or it be eve I wol make oon beheſt,
But thow have my help thy part ſhall be left.
Thyn help, quod Beryn; lewde fole, thow art more then maſid;
Dres the to the ſhippis ward with thy crown yraſid,
For I myght neyir ſpare the bet: trus and be agoo. [no,
I woll go with the, quod Geffrey, wher thow wolt or
And lern to plede law to wyn both howſe and lond.
So thow ſhalt, quod Hanybald, and led hym by the hond; [yknow
And leyd his hond oppon his nek: but and he had
Whom he had led, in ſikernes he had well levir in ſnowe
Have walkid XL myle, and rathir then fail mone;
For he wiſhid that Geffrey had ybe unbore
Full oft tyme in that day or the ple wer do,
And ſo did all that wrought Beryn ſham and woo.
Now yee that lift abide and here of ſotilte
Mowe know how that Beryn ſped in his ple,
And in what aray to the court he went,
And how Hanybald led Geffrey, diſware of his entent;
But yet he axid of Geffrey, What is thy name I pray?
Gylhochet, quod Geffrey, men clepid me yiſtirday.
And wher weer thow ybore? I n'ote I make a vow,
Seyd Geffrey to this Hanybald, I axe that of yew,
For I can tell no more but here I ſtond nowe.

Hanybald of his wordis hertlich lowghe,

And gon to tryve ...
That com was with Beryn ovir the ſalt n
Som ſeyd oon and ſom ſeyde anothir;
Som wold have the ſhippis, the parell, and
Som his eyen, ſom his lyf wold have, and
Or els he ſhuld for them fyne or he did pa
And in the mene whils they wer in this a
Beryn and theſe Romeyns wer com, in g
As myght be made of woll, and of colou
They toke a ſyde bench that for them w
When all was huſht and ſtill Beryn arof
And ſtode in the myddis of the hall
everichone,
And ſeyd, Sir Steward, in me ſhall be
I am ycom to anſwer as my day is ſet:
... and reſon; I axe yew no

And ſtarid al about with his lewd berd,
And was yhold a very fole of ech man hym herd.
The ſteward, and the officers, and the burgeyſis all,
Laughid at hym hertlich; the criour gan to call
The burgeyſe that had pleyd with Beryn at ches,
And he aroſe quiklich, and gan hym for to dres
Afore the ſteward at barr, as the maner is;
He gan to tell his tale wyth grete redines:
Here me, Sir Steward, this day is me ſet
To have right and reſon; I axe yew no bet,
Of Beryn that here ſtondith, that with me yiſtirday
Made a certen covenaunt, and at ches we did pley,
That whoſo were ymatid of us both too
Shuld do the todir's bidding, and yf he wold nat ſo
He muſt drink all the watir that ſalt wer in the ſe:
Thus I to hym ſurid and he alſo to me.
To preve my tale trew I am nat all aloon:
Up roſe 10 burgeyſis quyklich anoon,
And affermyd eviry word of his tale ſoth,
And made them all redy for to do their othe.
Evander the ſteward, Beryn, now, quod he,
Thow moſt anſwere nede; it woll noon othir be:
Take thy counſell to the: ſpede on; I have doon.
Beryn held hym ſtyll: Geffrey ſpak anoon;
Now be my trowith, quod Geffrey, I mervell much of
To bid us go to counſell, and knowith me wife inowghe,
And evir ſull aviſid, in twynkelyng of an eye,
To make a ſhort anſwer but yf my mowith be dry.

Shuld we go to counſell for o word or twey
Be my trowith we n'yll; let ſe mo that ple
And but he be yunſwer'd, and that right an
I geve yew leve to riſe and walk out everyc
And aſpy redily yf ye fynd me there,
In the meen whils I woll abyde here:
Nay, I tell trewly, I am wiſer then ye weer
For ther n'yis noon of you woot redely wha
Every man gan laughe all his hert till
Of Geffrey and his wordis; but Beryn held
And was cleen aſtonyd; but yit ner the latt
He held it nat al foly that Geffrey did clatt
But wiſely hym governyd, as Geffrey kym
For percell of his wiſdom he had tofore ſma
Sir Steward, quod Beryn, I endirſtond wele
The tale of this burgeyſe; now let anothir t
That I may take counſell and anſwer all at on
I graunt, quod the ſteward; then aring for th
Sith thow wolt be rewlid by the fol'is rede,
For he is right a wiſe man to help the in thy
Up aros the accuſours queyntlich anoon;
Hanybald was the firſt of them everichoon,
And gan to tell his tale with a proud chere.
Yiſtirday, Soverens, when I was here
Beryn and thes burgeyſe gon to plede faſt
For pleying at ches; ſo ferforth at laſt,
Thorough vertu of myn office, that I had in
Beryn's fyve ſhippis, for to go at large,

And to be in anſwer her this ſame day; [wey
So walkyng to the ſtrondward we bargeynyd by the
That I ſhuld have the marchandiſe that Beryn with hym brought,
Wherof I am ſeſid, as ful ſold and bought,
In covenaunte that I ſhuld his ſhippis fill ageyn
Of my marchandiſe, ſuch as he tofore had ſeyn
In myn own plaſe, howſis to or thre,
Full of marchandiſe as they myght be;
And I am evir redy, whenſoever he woll,
Let hym go or ſende, and charge his ſhippis full
Of ſuch marchandiſe as he findith there,
For in ſuch wordis we acordit were.
Up roſe x burgeyſis, not tho that roſe tofore,
But othir, and made them redy to have ſwore
That every word of Hanybald, from the begynnyng to the end,
Was ſoth and eke trewe, and with their mende
Full preſt they wer to preve; and ſeyd they wer pre- [ſent
At covenaunt making by God omnipotent.
It ſhall nat nede, quod Geffrey, whils that I here ſtond,
For I woll preve it my ſelf with my right honde,
For I have been in four batellis heretofore,
And this ſhall be the fift, and therfor I am ſwore.
Beholdith, and ſeith, and turnyd hym about;
The ſteward and the burgeyſe gamyd all about;
The Romeyns held them ſtill, and lawhghid but a lite.
Wyth that cam the blynd man his tale to endite,

That God hym grant wynnyng right as he hath
Beryn and his company ſtood all aſtryvyd [aſervid.
Betwene hope and drede, right in high diſtres,
For of wele or of woo they had no ſikernes.
Beryn, quod this blynd, thoughe I may nat ſee
Stond nere yit the barr, my comyng is for the,
That wrongfullich thow witholdiſt my both to eyen,
The wich I toke the for a tyme, and quyklich to me
hijen,
And take them me ageyn, as our covenaunt was.
Beryn, I take no reward of othir mennys caſe,
But oonlich of myn oen; that ſtont me moſt an hond.
Now bleſſid be God in heven that brought the to this
lond!
For ſith our laſt parting many bitir teris
Have I lete for thy love, that ſom tyme partineris
Of wynnyng and of leſing were yeris fele,
And evir I fond the trewe, tyl at the laſt thow didiſt
Awey wyth my too eyen that I toke to the [ſtele
To ſe the tregeteurs pley and their ſotilte,
As yiſtirday here in this ſame plaſe
Tofore yew, Sir Steward, reherſid as it was.
Full trew is that byword, *A man to ſerwe ſabill*
Ledith oft Beyard from his owen ſtabill.
Beryn, by the I meen, though thow make it ſtraunge,
For thow knowiſt trewly that I made no chaunge
Of my good eyen for thyn that badder were.
Therwith ſtode up burgeyſe four witnes to bere.

Beryn held hym ſtyll, and Geffrey ſpak anoon; 2454
Now of thy lewd compleynt, and thy maſid moon,
By my trowith, quod Geffrey, I have grete mervaill,
For though thow haddiſt eyen-ſight it ſhuld litill
availe;
Thow ſhuldiſt nevir fare the bet, but the wors, in fay,
For al thing may be ſtill now for the in houſe and way,
And yf thow haddiſt thyn eyen thou woldiſt no coun-
ſell hele; 2460
I know wele by thy ſiſnamy thy kynd wer to ſtele:
And eke it is thy profite and thyn eſe alſo
To be blynd as thow art; for now wherſo thow go
Thow haſt thy lyvlode whils thow art alyve, 2464
And yf thow myghtiſt ſe thow ſhuldiſt nevir thryve.
Al the houſe throughout ſave Beryn and his feris
Lawghid of Geffroy, that watir on their leris
Ran down from their eyen for his maſid wit.
Wythat cam the woman, hir tung was nat ſclyt,
Wyth 45 burgeyſis, and women alſo fele, 2470
Her quarel for to preve, and Beryn to apele,
With a feir knave child yloke wythin their armys,
And gan to tel her tale of wrongis and of harmys,
And eke of unkyndnes, untrowith, and falſhede,
That Beryn had ywrought to hir, that quyntlich from
hir yede 2475
Anoon opponher wedding, when he his wyll had doon,
And brought hir wyth chyld, and lete hir ſit aloon

Let hym make amendis, or els tell e
Why hym ought nat fynd, as man o
These fiftene burgeysis quyklich al f
And as fele wymen as stode by hir t
Seyd that they were present when th
And that every word that the wom
Was trew, and eke Beryn had hir sc
Benedicite! quod Geffrey, Beryn, ha
Now have God my trowith the day
I shall trust the the les thow toldist
As wele of thy wedding and of thy
Go to, and kys them both, thy wyfa
Be thow nat ashamyd, for they both
This wedding was right privy, bu
Behold thy sone, it semith crope ou
And eke of thy condicioune both s

Yit for his parentyne to pipe as doith a mowſe
I woll hym teche, and for to pike a ſnayl out of his howſe,
And to berk as doith an hound, and ſey Baw, baw,
And turn round about as a cat doith wyth a ſtraw,
And to blete as doith a ſhepe, and ney as doith an hors,
And to low as doith a cow; and as myn own corps
I woll cheriſh hym every day for his modirs ſake:
And gan to ſtappe ner the child, to have ytake,
As ſemed by his countenaunce, although he thought nat ſo:
But modir was evir ware, and blenchid to and fro,
And leyd hir hond betwene, and lokid ſomwhat wroth,
And Geffrey in pur wrath beſhrewid them all both;
For by my trowith, quod Geffrey, wel maſid is thy pan,
For I woll teche thy ſone the craftis that I can,
That he in tyme to come myght win his lyvlode,
To wex therfor angry thow art verry wood.
Of huſbond, wyff, and ſone, by the Trynyte
I n'ote wich is the wiſeſt of them all thre.
No, ſothly, quod the ſteward; it liith all in thy noll
Both wit and wyſdom, and previth by thy poll:
For all be that Geffrey wordit ſotilly,
The ſteward and the burgeyſis held it for foly
All that evir he ſeyd, and toke it for good game,
And had full litill knowlech he was Geffrey the lame.
Beryn and his company ſtode ſtill as ſtone
Betwene hope and drede, diſware how it ſhuld goon,

Have I nat entourmid yew now an
That I yew wold help, and bryng t
Yf ye coud plede as well as I full li
Pluk'up thy hert, quod Geffrey, Be
Leve thy blab lewd, quod Beryn tc
It doith no thing availl that forowe
It is nat worth a fly al that thow ha
Have we nat els now for to think c
Saff here to jangill? Machyn rose a
And went to the barr, and gan to t
He was as fals as Judas, that set Cr
Sir Steward, quod this Machyn, an
Knowith wele how Melan with pu
And othir marchandise, seven yere
Went toward Rome, and how tha

The knyf I know wel inowe; alſo the man ſtont here,
And dwellith in this town, and is a cotelere,
That made the ſame knyf wyth his too hondis,
That wele I woot there is noon like to ſech al Criſten
For 3 precioufe ſtonys been wythin the haft [londis;
Perfectlich ycouchit, and ſotillich by craft
Endendit in the haft, and that right coriouſly,
A ſaphir, and a ſalidone, and a rich ruby.
The cotelere cam lepeing forth with a bold chere,
And ſeyd to the ſteward that Machyn told now here
Every word is trew, ſo beth the ſtonys ſet;
I made the knyf my ſelf, who myght know it bet?
And toke the knyff to Machyn, and he me pay'd wele;
So is this felon gilty; there is no more to tell.
Up aroſe burgeyſis by 2 by 3 by 4,
And ſey'd they wer preſent the ſame tyme and hour
When Machyn wept ſore, and brought his fadir's gownd,
And gaf hym the ſame knyff oppon the ſee ſtrond.
Beth ther eny mo pleyntifs of record?
Quod Geffrey to the ſteward: and he ageynward;
How ſemeth the, Gylhochet, beth ther nat inowghe?
Make thyn anſwer, Beryn, caſe that thow mowe,
For oon or othir thow muſt ſey, although it nat availle,
And but thow leſe or thow go methinkith grete mer-
Beryn goith to counſell and his company, [vaill.
And Geffrey bode behinde to her more and le, 2585

For but I hym help he is cleen unde
But I woll help hym al that I can, an
By my power and connyng, ſo I am
For I durſt wage battell wyth yew
ſtrong,
That my maiſter is in the trowith
For and we have lawe I ne hold yev
In yewr own falſhede, ſo be yee no
Wherfor yit or eve I ſhal abate yew
That ſom of yew ſhall be right feyn
The burgeyſes gon to lawgh, and ſco
Gylhochet, quod Evander, and tho
Bryng it thus about it were a redy
He is a good fool, quod Hanybald,
To put hymſelf aloon in ſtrengith a

And eke it were untrowith and eke grete ſyn
But eche of us that pleynith myght ſomwhat wyn.
Hanybald bote his lippis, and herd them both wele;
Towching the marchandiſe o tale I ſhall yew tell,
And eke make a vow, and hold my beheſt,
That of the marchandiſe yewr part ſhall be leſt;
For I have made a bargeyn that may nat be undo;
I woll hold his covenaunt and he ſhal myn alſo.
Up roos quicklich the burgeyſe Syrophanes;
Hanybald, quod he, the law goith by no lanys,
But hold ferth the ſtreyt wey, even as doith a lyne;
For yiſtirday when Beryn with me did dyne
I was the firſt perſon that put hym in areſt;
And for he wold go large thow haddiſt in charge and
To ſeſe both ſhip and goodis til I were anſwerid;
Then muſt I firſt be ſervid, this knowith al men ylerid.
The woman ſtode beſidis, and cried wondir faſt,
Ful ſoth is that byword, *To pot who comyth laſt*
He worſt is ſervid: and ſo it farith by me:
Yit nethirles, Sir Steward, I truſt to yewr lentè,
That knowith beſt my cauſe and my trew entent;
I axe yew no more but rightful jugement:
Let me have part with othir ſith he my huſbond is:
Good Sir, beth aviſid; I axe yew nat amys.
Thus they gon to ſtryve, and wer of high mode
For to depart emong them othir mennys good,
Wher they tofore had nevir properte,
Ne nevir ſhuld thereaftir by doom of equyte;

id othir cauſe then they had tho.
at counſell, his hert was full woo,
yny ſory, diſtrakt, and al amayde,
ey levid noon othir but Geffrey had be-
ayide;
was ſo long they coud no maner rede,
i by hymſelf wiſhed he had be dede.
l God! they ſeyd, I trow tofore this day
gretter treſon, fere, ne affray,
onto mankind then now is to us here,
ich by this Geffrey with his ſotil chere;
he made it he wold us help echone,
re be ymyryd he letith us ſit alcon.
, quod Beryn, be as it be may;
ıfwer nede, ther is noon othir way;
ır let me know your wit and your counſaile.
, and wrong their hondis, and gan to waille
hat they wer bore, and ſhortly of the lyve
id that they wer. With that came Geffrey
m towards, and began to ſmyle.
Geffrey wher he had be al the while?
y oppon us, and help us as thow hight.
yow right wele through grace of Godd'is
ight;
ell yow tiding of their governaunce.
inaltercatiouneandſtryfinpoynttopraunce
your goodis, and levith verrily
r impoſſibill yew to remedy;

But their high pride and their presumpcioune
Shal be yit or eve their confusioune;
And to make amendis ech man for his pleynt, 2(
Let se ther'for your good avise how they might
ateynt.
The Romeyns stode still, as who had shor their he
In feith, quod Beryn, we can no maner rede,
But in God and yew we submit us all,
Body, lyf, and goodis, to stond or to fall, 2(
And nevir for to travers o word that thow seyst;
Help us, good Geffrey, as wele as thou mayst.
Deperdeux! quod Geffrey, and I woll do me peyn
To help yow as my connyng woll strech and atey
The Romeyns went to barr, and Geffrey altofore
With a nice countenaunce, barefote, and to tore,
Pleying with a yerd he bare in his honde, 26
And was evir wistlyng at every pase comaunde.
The steward and the burgeyfis had game inowghe
Of Geffrey'is nice comyng, and hertlich lowghe;
And eche man seyd, Gyihochet, com nere; 26
Thow art right welcome, for thow makist us cher
The same welcom, quod Geffrey, that yee woll us
Fall oppon yewr hedis, I pray to God, and wers.
They held hym for a verry fole, but he held the
wel more; 26
And so he made them in breff tyme, all though th
wer nat shore.

yntith now, quod Geffrey, and let make pese;
Of myrthis and of japis tyme is now to cese,
And speke of othir mater that we have to doon,
For and we hew amys eny maner stone
We know wele in certeyn what pardon we shul have;
The more is our nede us to defend and save.
My master hath be at counsell, and ful avisid is
That I shall have the wordis, speke I wele or mys;
Wherfor, Sir Steward, and ye burgeysis all,
Sittith upright, and writith nat, for aventuris that may
For and ye deme untrewly, or do us eny wrong, [fall;
Ye shull be refourmyd, be ye nevir so strong,
Of every poynt and injury, and that in grete haste,
For he is nat unknowe to us that may yow chaste:
Hold forth the right wey, and by no side lanys.
And as towching the first pleyntif Syrophanes,
That pleyd with my master yistirday at ches,
And made a certeyn covenaunte, who that had th
In the last game, al thoughe I wer nat there, [wer
Should do the todir's bidding, whatsoevir it wer,
Or dryuk all the watir that salt wer in the see;
Thus I trowe, Sir Steward, ye woll record the ple,
And yf I have ymisid in lettir or in word
The lawe, wol I be rewlid astir yewr record;
For we be ful avisid in this wise to answere.
Evander the steward, and al men that wer there
Had mervil much of Geffrey, that spak so redel
Whose wordis tofore semyd al soly,

And wer aſtonyed cleen, and gan for to drede,
And ev'ry man tyl othir lenyd his hede,
And ſeyd he reported the tale right formaily;
He was no fole in certen, but wiſe, ware, and ſely,
For he hath but yiapid us and ſcornyd heretofore,
And we have hold hym a fole, but we be wel more.
Thus they ſtodied on Geffrey, and laughid tho right naught.
When Geffrey had aſpied they wer in ſuch thought,
And their hertis trobel d, penſyf, and anoyed,
Hym lyſt to dryve in bet the nayl, till they were fully ſoveren Sirs, he ſeyd, ſith that it ſo is [cloyid.
That in reporting of our ple ye fynd nothing amys,
As provith wele yowr ſcilence, eke ye withſeyth nat
O word of our tale, but clene without ſpot,
Then to our anſwer I prey yow take hede,
For we wol ſey al the trowith right as it is in dede;
For this is ſoth and certen, it may nat be withſeyd,
That Beryn that here ſtondith was thus ovirpleid
In the laſt game when wagir was opon;
But that was his ſufferaunce, as ye ſhull here anoon,
For in all this cete ther n'ys no maner man
Can pley betir at ches then my maſtir can;
Ne bet then I, though I it ſey, can nat half ſo much;
Now how he loſt it by his wyll the cauſe I woll teche;
For ye wend and ween that ye had hym engyned,
But ye ſhul fele in every veyn that ye be undirmined.

And ybrought at ground, and eke ovirmufid. 274
And agenſt the firſt that Beryn is acuſid
Herith now ententyflich. When we wer on the ſee
Such a tempeſt on us fill that noon myght othir ſe-
Of thundir, wynd, and lightenyng, and ſtormys th
Fiſtene dayis during the tempeſt was ſo ſtrong [amon
That eche man till othir began hym for to ſhryve,
And made their avowis, yf they myght have the lyv
Som to ſe the ſepulkir, and ſom to othir plaſe, 275
To ſech holy ſeyntis for help and for grace;
Som to faſt and do pennaunce, and ſom do almyſdede
Tyl at laſt, as God wold, a voiſe to us ſeyd,
In our moſt turment, and deſperat of mynd,
That yf we wold be favid my maiſter muſt hym byn
Be faith and eke be vow, when he cam to lond, 276
To drink al the ſalt watir within the ſee ſtrond,
Without drinking eny ſope of the freſh watir; [ne
And taught hym al the ſotilte how and in what m
That he ſhuld wirch by engyne and by a ſotill charm
To drink all the ſalt watir and have hymſelf no harm
But ſtop the freſh rivers by every coſt ſide, 276
That they entir nat in the ſe thorough the world wyd
The voiſe we herd but naught we ſaw; ſo wer ou
witts ravid,
For this was end fynally, yf we luſt be ſavid. 276
Wher'for my maſter Beryn, when he cam to this port
To his avow and promys he made his firſt reſort,

Or that he wold bergeyn eny marchandiſe,
And right doith theſe marchandis in the ſame wiſe
That maken their avowis in ſaving of their lyv'is,
They completeyn their pilgremagis or they ſe their wyvis. 2775
So mowe ye ondirſtond that my maſter Beryn
Of fre will was ymatid, as he that was a pilgrym,
And myght nat perfourm by many thowſand part
His avow and his heſt wythout right ſotil art,
Without help and ſtrengith of many mennys myght.
Sir Steward, and Sir Burgeyſe, if we ſhul have right
Sirophanes muſt do coſt and aventure 2782
To ſtop al the freſh ryvers into the ſee that entir,
For Beryn is redy in al thing hym to quyte,
So he be in defaute muſt pay for the wite.
Sith ye been wiſe al what nede is much clatir?
Ther was no covenaunte them betwene to drink freſh watir. 2787
When Sirophanes had yherd al Geffrey's tale
He ſtode al abaſhid, with colour wan and pale,
And lokid oppon the ſteward with a rewful chere,
And on othir frendſhip and neyghbours he had there,
And preyd them of counſell the anſwere to reply.
Theſe Romeyns, quod the ſteward, been wondir ſcly,
And eke right ymmagytyf, and of ſotil art,
That I am in grete dowte how yee ſhul depart 2795
Without harm in oon ſide: our lawis, well thow wot,
Is to pay damagis, and eke alſo the coſt,

Of every party plentyf that fallith in his pleynt:
Let hym go quyt I counſell, yf it may ſo be queynt.
I merveil, quod Sirophanes, of their ſotilte,
But ſith that it ſo ſtondith, and may noon othir be,
I do woll be counſell, and grauntid Beryn quyte.
But Geffrey thought anothir, and without reſpite,
Sirs, he ſeyd, me wetith wele that ye wol do us right,
And ſo ye muſt nedis, and ſo ye have us highte;
And therfore, Sir Steward, ye occupy our plaſe,
And ye know wele what law wol in this caſe;
My maſtir is redy to perfourm his avow.
But natheleſs, quod the ſteward, I cannat wete how
To ſtop all the freſh watir were poſſibilite.
Yis, in ſoth, quod Geffrey, who had of gold plente
As man coud wiſh and it myght well be do:
But thfat is nat our defaute, he hath no treſour to.
Let hym go to in haſte, or find us ſuerte
To make amendis to Beryn for his iniquite,
Wrong, and harm, and treſpas, and undewe wexaciounе,
Loſt of ſale, and marchandiſe, diſeſe, and tribulaciounе,
That we have ſuſtenyd thorough his iniquite.
What vaylith it to tary us? for though ye ſotil pry
We ſhull have reſon wher ye wol or no,
So woll we that ye knowe what that we woll do;
In certen full aviſid to lſope for to paſe,
And declare every poynt, the more and eke the laſe,

That of yeur opyn errours hath pleyn correctioune,
And ageyns his jugement is noon protectioune:
He is yewr lord riall, and ſoveren jugge and lele,
That and ye work in eny poynt to hym liith our apele.
So when the ſteward had yherd, and the burgeyſis alle,
How Geffrey had yſteryd, that went ſo nighe the gall,
What for ſhame, and drede of more harm, and re-
preſſe,
They made Sirophanes, weer hym looth or leſſe,
To take Beryn gage, and plegg find alſo,
To byde the ward and jugement of that he had myſdo.
Now ferthermore, quod Geffrey, ſith that it ſo is
That of the firſt pleyntyf we have ſikernes,
Now to the Marchant we muſt nedis anſwere,
That bergeyned with Beryn al that his ſhippis bere,
In covenaunte that he ſhuld his ſhippis fill ageyn
Of othir marchandiſe that he tofore had ſeyn
In Hanybald'is plaſe, howſis to or thre,
Full of marchandiſe as they might be;
Let us pas thidir, yf eny thing be there
At our luſt and liking, as they accordit were.
I graunt wele, quod Hanybald, thow axiſt but righte;
Up aroſe theſe burgeyſis, Thow axiſt but right.
The ſteward and his comperis entrid firſt the howſe,
And ſaw nothing within, ſtraw, ne leff, ne mowſe,
Save tymbir, and the tyle ſtonys, and the wallis white.
I trow, *quod the* ſteward, the wynnyng woll be but-
lite

As ſone as they were [illegible]
For ſorys of their hert, but as tofore is ſe
The howſe was cleen yſwept; then Geffi
To help yf he coud. Let me aloon, quod
Yit ſhul they have the wers as ſotil as th
Evander the ſteward in the mene while
Spak to the burgeyſe, and began to ſmyl
Though Sirophanes be yhold thes Ror
curs,
Yit I trow that Hanybald woll put hym
For I am ſuyr and certeyn within they
What ſey ye be my pleynt, Sirs, quod I
For I make a vow I woll nevir ceſe
Tyl Syrophanes have of Pervn a pleyn
And to make hym quyte of his ſubmiſ
[illegible] of his contritio

But evir preyd Geffrey to help yf he coud ought.
I woll nat faill, quod Geffrey, and was tofore be-
Of too botirfliis, as white as eny fnowe; [thought
He lete them flee within the houfe, that aftir on the
wowe
They clevid wonder faft, as their kynd woll,
Aftir they had flew to reft anothir pull.
When Geffrey faw the botirfliis cleving on the wall
The fteward and the burgeyfe in he gan call;
Lo! Sirs, he fayd, whofo evir repent,
We have chofe marchandife moft to our talent
That we fynd herein. Behold, Sir Hanybal,
The yondir botirfliis that clevith on the wall;
Of fuch ye muft fill our fhippis al fyve.
Pluk up thy hert Beryn, for thow moft nedis thryve;
For when we out of Rome in marchantfare went,
To purchafe botirfliis was our moft entent;
Yit woll I tell the caufe efpecial and why:
There is a leche in Room that hath ymade a cry
To make an oyntement to cure all tho ben blynde,
And al maner infirmytees that growith in mankynde.
The day is fhort; the work is long: Sir Hanyball, ye
mut hy.
When Hanybald herd this tale he feyd pryvely
In counfell to the fteward; In foth I have the wers,
For I am fikir by this pleynt that fhall I litil purs.
So me femeth, quod the fteward, for in the world
So many botirfliis wold nat be founde [round

The burgeyſis everichone, that were
Were anoyid ſore when they herd o
Geffrey with his wiſdom held them l
That they were acombrit in their ov
When Hanybald with his frendis h
matere
They drow them towards Beryn, and
Oonly for botirfliis ye com fro your
And we you tell in ſikirnes and opor
That ſo many botirflyes we ſhul nev
Wherefore we be aviſid othirwiſe to
That Hanybald ſhall releſe his coven
And delyver the good ageyn that fr
And were you no mere, but let you g
Nay forſoth, quod Geffrey, us nedith
Ye ſhull hold our covenaunt and we
For we ſhull have reſon wher ye wol

On Beryn he hath ſurmyſid, as previth by his plee,
And thiat ye ſhull opynlich know wele and ſee;
For as I undirſtode hym he ſeyd that fele yeris
Beryn, that here ſtondith, and he were pertyneris
Of wynnyng and of leſyng, as men it uſe and doith,
And that they chaungit eyen, and yit this is ſothe:
But the cauſe of chaunging yit is to yow onknow,
Wher'fore I woll declare it both to high and lowe.
In that ſame tyme that this burgeyſe blynd,
And my maſter Beryn, as faſt as feith might hynde,
Were marchaundis in comyn of al that they myght
Saff of lyf and lym, and of dedely ſyn,
Ther fill in tho marchis of al thing ſuch a derth
That joy, comfort, and ſolas, and al maner myrth,
Was exilid cleen, ſaff oonly moleſtatioune,
That abood continuel—deſperatioune:
So when that the pepil wer in moſt myſcheffe
God that is above, that al thing doith releve,
Sent them ſuch plente of mony, fruyte, and corn,
Wich turnid al to joy their mournyng al to forn;
Then gaf they them to mirth, revel, pley, and ſong,
And thankid God above evir more among
Of their relevacioune from woo into gladnes,
For *Aftir ſour when ſwete is com it is a pleſant mes.*
So in the meen while of this proſperite
Ther cam ſuch a pleyer into the ſame contre
That nevir thertofore was ſeyn ſuch anothir,
That wele was the creture that born was of his modir

That myght ſe the mirthis of this jogelours,
F[illegible]f the world wide tho dayis he bare the
F[illegible]there n'as man ne woman in that regio
That ſet of hymſelf the ſtore of a boton
Yf he had not ſey his myrthis and his game.
So oppon a tyme this pleyer did proclame
That al manere of pepill his pleyis wold ſe
Shuld com oppon a certen dey to the grete c
Then among othir my maſter here, Beryn,
And this ſame blynd, that pledith now wit
Made a certen covenaunt that they wold ſe
The mervellis of this pleyer and his fotilte:
So what for hete of ſomir, age, and febilnes
And eke alſo the long way, this blynd for w
Fill flat adown to the erth; o fote ne myght
Wher'for my maſter Beryn in hert was full
And ſeyd, My frende, how now? mow ye
No, he ſeyd, by hym that firſt made mas;
And yit I had levir, as God my ſoule ſave,
Se thes wondir pleyis then all the good I ha
I cannat els, quod Beryn, but yf it may nat
But that ye and I mut retourn age
Afrir ye be refreſhid of your werynes,
For to leve yew in this plite it wer no gent
Then ſeyd this blynd, I am avifid bet;
Beryn, ye ſhull wend thidir without eny le
And have myn eyen with yew that they the
And I woll have yeurs tyll ye come age.

Thus was their covenaunt made, as I to yow report,
For eſe of this blynd, and moſt for his comfort.
But wotith wele the whole ſcience of all ſurgery
Was unyd or the chaunge was made of both eye
With many ſotill enchantours and eke nygramancers,
That ſent were for the nonys maſtris and ſcoleris.
So when all was complete my maſtir went his wey
With this mann'ys eyen and ſaw all the pley,
And haſtly retourned into that plaſe age,
And fond this blynd ſeching on hondis and on kne,
Graſping all aboute to fynd that he had lore,
Beryn his both eyen that he had tofore.
But as ſone as Beryn had pleyn knowleche
That his eyen were yloſt, unneth he myght areche
O word, for pure anguyſh that he toke ſodenly,
And from that day till now ne myght he nevir ſpy.
This man in no plaſe ther law was ymevid;
But now in his preſence the ſoth is full yprevid,
That he ſhall make amendis or he hens pas
Right as the lawe wol deme, ethir more or las:
For my maſtr'is eyen were betir and more clere
Then theſe that he hath now to ſe both fer and nere;
So wold he have his own, that proper were of kynd,
For he is evir redy to take to the blynde
The eyen that he had of hym, as covenaunt was,
So he woll do the ſame. Now, Sovereris, in this caſe
Ye mut take hede for to deme right,
For it wer no reſon my maſtir ſhuld leſe his ſyght

For his trew hert and his gentilnes.
Beryn, quod the blind, tho I woll the releſe
My quarell and my cauſe, and fall fro my pleynt.
Thow mut nede, quod Geffrey, for thow art ateynt,
So mut thow profir gage, and borowis fynd alſo,
For to make amendis, as othir have ydo.
Sir Steward, do us law, ſith we deſire but right:
As we been peſe marchandis us longith nat to fight,
But pleyn us to the law, yf ſo we be agrevid.
Anoon upon that Geffrey theſe wordis had ymevid
The blynd man fond borowis for all his maletalent,
And were yentrid in the court to byde the jugement;
For thoughe that he blynde were yit had he good plente,
And more wold have wonne through his iniquite.
Now herith, Sirs, quod Geffrey: thre pleyntifs been affurid;
And as anenſt the ferth this woman hath arerid,
That pleynith here on Beryn, and ſeyth ſhe is his wyfe,
And that ſhe hath many a dey led a peynous lyfe,
And much ſorow endurid his child to ſuſtene,
And al is ſoth and trew. Now rightfullich to deme
Whether of them both ſhall othir obey,
And folowe will and luſtis, Sir Steward, ye mut ſey.
And therewith Geffrey lokid aſide on this woman
How ſhe chaungit colours, pale and eke wan.
All for nought, quod Geffrey, for ye mut with us go,
And endure with your huſbond both wele and woo:

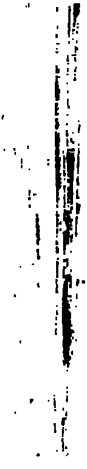
And wold have take her by the hond, but ſhe awey did breyde,
And with a grete ſighing theſe wordis ſhe ſeyd;
That ageyns Beryn ſhe wold plede no more,
But gagid with too borowis, as othir had do tofore.
The ſteward ſat as ſtill as who had ſhor his hede,
And ſpecially the pleyntifs were in much dredo:
Geffrey ſet his wordis in ſuch maner wiſe
Tha wele they wiſt they myght nat ſcape in no wiſe
Without loſs of goodis for damage and for coſt,
For ſuch wer their lawis wher pleyntis wer yloſt.
Geffrey had full perſeyte of their encombirment,
And eke he was in certen that the jugèment
Shuld pas with his maſtir; wherfor he anoon,
Soveren Sirs, he ſeyd, yit muſt we ferthir goon,
And anſwere to this Machyn, that ſeith the knife is
That found was on Beryn; ther'of he ſeith nat amys:
And for more prefe he ſeith in this manere
That here ſtondith preſent the ſame cotelere
That the knyfe made, and the precious ſtonys thre
Within the haft been couchid, that in Cryſtyanite,
Thoughe men wold of purpoſe make ſerch and feche,
Men ſhuld nat fynd in al thing a knyfe that were it liche;
And more opyn prefe than mann'ys own knowleche
Men of law ne clerkis con nat tell ne teche.
Now ſith we be in this manere thus ferforth ago,
Then were ſpedfull for to know how Beryn cam firſt

Have poſſeſſioune of the knyfe that Machyn ſeith is his:
To yew unknowe I ſhall enfourm the trowith as it is.
Now 7 yere and paſſid, opon a Tuyſday
In the Paſſioun-week, when men leven pley,
And uſe more devocioune, faſtyng, and preyer,
Then in othir tyme or ſeſon of the yere,
This Beryn's fadir erlich wold ariſe,
And barefote go to chirch to Godd'is ſerviſe,
And lay hymſelf aloon from his own wyfe,
In reverence of the tyme, and mending of his lyfe:
So on the ſame Tuyſday that I tofore nempt [went,
This Beryn roſe and rayd hym, and to the chirch
And mervelid in his hert his fadir was nat there,
And homward went ageyn with drede and eke fere.
Into his fadir's chambir ſodenlich he rakid,
And fond hym ligg ſtan dede oppon the ſtraw al na-
And the clothis halid from the bed awey. [kid,
Out, alas! quod Beryn, that evir I ſaw this dey!
The meyne herd the noiſe, how Beryn cried alas,
And cam into the chambir al that therein was;
But the dole, and the ſorowe, and anguyſh, that was
It vaylith nat at this tyme to declare it here; [there
But Beryn had moſt of all, have ye no doute:
And anoon they ſerchid the body al aboute,
And fond this ſame knyfe, the poynt right at his hert
Of Beryn's fadir, whoſe teres gan outſtert
When he drowgh out the knyfe of his fadir's wound;
Then ſtandede I ſaw hym fall down to the ground

In ſight of the moſt part that beth with hym nowe here,
And they affermyd it for ſoth, as Geffrey did them lere:
And yit had I nevir ſuſpecioun from that day tyll noweth
Who ded that curſed dede, tyll Machyn with his
Afore yew hath knowlechid that the knyfe is his;
So mut he nedis anſwer for his deth ywis.
When Machyn had yherd all Geffrey'is tale
He roſe of bench ſodenly with colour wan and pale,
And ſeyd onto Beryn, Sir, ageyn the
I woll plete no more, for it wer gret pete
To combir yew with actions that beth of nobill kynde.
Graunt mercy! Sir, quod Geffrey; but yit ye ſhull fynde
Borowis or ye pas, amendis for to make
For our undewe vexacioune, and gage alſo us take
In ſign of ſubmyſſioune for your injury,
As law woll and reſon, for we woll uttirly
Procede tyll we have jugement finall;
And ther'for, Sir Steward, what that evir fall
Delay us no longer but gyve us jugement,
For triſtith ye noon othir but we be fullich bent
To ſpope for to wend, and in his high preſence
Reherce al our plees, and have his ſentence;
Then ſhull ye make fynys, and highlich be agrevid.
And as ſone as the ſteward herd thes wordis mevid,
Reſon, ryght, and law, ſeyd the ſteward tho,
Ye mut nedis have wher I woll or no;

And to preve my full wyll, or we ferther goon
Quicklich he commaundit, and ſparid nevir oc
24 burgeyſis in law beſt ylerid,
Reherſyng them the plees, and how Geffrey anſ
And on lyf and lym, and forfetur of good,
And as they wold nat leſe the ball within their
To draw a-part togidir, and by their all aſſent
Spare no man on lyve to gyve trew jugement.
And when thes 24 burgeyſis had yherd
The charge of the ſteward, right ſore they wer
To leſe ther own lyvis but they demed trowith
And eke of their neybours they had grete row
For they perſeyvid clerelich in the plee throug
Their frendis had the wors ſide, ther'of they l
dout,
And yf we deme trewly they woll be ſore ano
Yit it is betir then we be ſhamyd and diſtroyid
And anoon they wer acordit, and ſeyd with B
And demed every pleyntif to make a grete fyr
With Beryn, and hym ſubmyt heolich to his g
Body, good, and catell, for wrong and their tr
So ferforth, tyll at laſt it was ſo bout ybore
That Beryn had the doubill good that he had
And wyth joy and myrth, wyth all his compa
He droughe hym to his ſhippis ward wyth fo
melody.
The ſteward and the burgeyſe from the court
Into their own placis, and evir as they went

They talkid of the Romeyns, how ſotill they wer
To aray hym like a fole that for them ſhuld anſwer.
What vylith it, quod Hanybald, to angir or to curs?
And yit I am in certen I ſhall fare the wers
All the dayis of my lyfe for this day'is pleding,
And ſo ſhal al the remnaunt; and their hondis wryng,
Both Syrophanes, and the blynd, the woman, and
And be bet aviſid er they eftſonys pleyne, [Machyn,
And al othir perſonys wythyn this cete
Mell the les wyth Romeyns whils they here be;
For ſuch anothir fole was nevir yit yborn,
For he did naught ellis but evir with us ſcorn
I'yll he had us caught even by the ſhyn
With his ſotill wittis in our own grene.
Now woll I retourn to Beryn ageyn,
That of his grete lukir in hert was right feyne,
And ſo was all his meyne, as them ought wele,
That they wer ſo delyverid from turment like to hell,
And graciuſly relevid out of ther grete myſchef,
And yſet above in comfort and bouchef.
Now in ſoth, quod Beryn, it may nat be denied
N'ad Geffrey and his witt be we had be diſtroyid:
Ithankid be Almyghty God omnipotent
That for our conſolacioune Geffrey to us ſent!
And in proteſt opynly, here among yew alle,
Half my good, whils that I lyve, whatevir me befall,
I graunt it here to Geffrey, to gyve or to ſell,
And nevir to part from me, yf it wer his wyl,

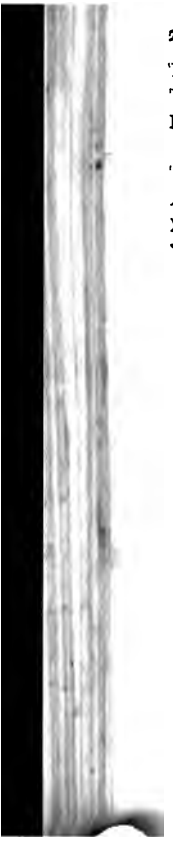


To bryng me at Room, for thi
It ſhall be do, quod Beryn, and
Deperdeux! quod Geffrey, ther
He rayid hym othirwiſe; and v
They went to the dyner the ho
With pipis and wyth trompis, a
And in the myddis of their met
Maidens freſh atirid as myght l
Com from the Duke Iſope, lord
Everich wyth a preſent, and th
The firſt bare a cup of gold, and
So corouſe and ſo nobill that I c
The ſecond brought a ſwerd yſl
Ifretid all with perelis orient ar
The third had a mantell of luſty
The uttir part of purpill, yfurri
The ferth a cloth of gold, a wo
That nevir man tofore ſaw cloi

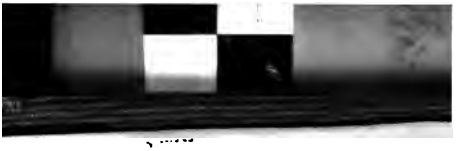
They knelid adown echone right tofore Beryn; [fyne:
The firſt did the meſſage, that taught was wel and
Iſope, ſhe ſeyd, Sir Beryn, that is our lord riall,
And gretith yew, and ſendith yew theſe preſentis all,
And joy hath of yewr wiſdom and of yewr gover-
naunce, 3206
And preyd you to com and have with hym pleſaunce
To morowe, and ſe his palyſe, and to ſport you there,
Yee and all your company. Beryn made noon anſwere,
But ſat ſtyll, and beheld the women and the ſondis;
And aftirward aviſely the ſwerd firſt he hondis
And commaundit therewith all the wymmen waſſh
and ſit, 3212
And pryvelich chargit officers that with al their wit
To ſerve them of the beſt, and make them hertly chere
Reſſeyving al the preſentis in worſhipful manere.
I cannat wele expreſs the joy that they had,
But I ſuppoſe tofore that day that they were nat ſo glad
That they wer ſo aſcapid fortune and myſchefe,
And thonkid God above that al thing doith releſe;
For *Aftir myſty cloudis ther comith a cler ſonne,* 3220
So aftir bale comyth bote, whoſo byde conne. [mete
The joy and nobley that they had whils they wer at
It vaylith nat at this tyme ther'of long to trete:
But Geffrey ſat with Beryn, as he had ſervid wele;
Their hedis they leyd togidir, and begon to tell
In what maner the wymen ſhuld be anſwered. 3226
Geffrey evir aviſid Beryn ther'of he leryd,

And prey d them [illegible]
Unto the worthy lordſhip of Iſope, tl
To me that am unworthy, ſave of his
And thank hym of his gyftis as ye ca
To morow I woll be redy his heſt to
With this I have ſave condit I may cc
For me and al my feleſhip ſaff to com
Truſting in his diſcrecioune that thou
He wol nat be diſpleſid; for in my co
It hath evir be the cuſtom, and is intc
That yf a lord riall deſirith for to ſee
Eny maner perſone that is of las degr
Er he approche his preſence he wol ha
A ſaff condit enſelid, or els ſom othir
That he may com and pas without di
Throughout all our marchis it is the c
Thes wymmen toke their leve witho
Repeyring onto Iſope, and al as it wa

Afore al othir preſentis, he demed in hys minde
That Beryn was ycom of ſom nobill kynde. [forgete;
The nyght was paſt; the morowe cam; Iſope had nat
He chargit barons twelf with Beryn for to mete
To cond hym ſaff and his meyne; and al perfourmyd was.
Thre dayis ther they ſportid hym in myrth and ſolas,
That throughe the wiſe inſtruccioune of Geffrey nyght
Beryn pleſid Iſope with wordis al to pay, [and dey
And had hym ſo in port and in governaunce
Of all honeſt myrthis and witty daliaunce,
That Iſope caſt his chere to Beryn ſo groundly,
That at laſt ther was no man with Iſope ſo pryvy,
Reſorting to his ſhippis, comyng to and fro,
Thoroughe the wit of Geffrey, that eche day it fil ſo
That Iſope coude no wher chere when Beryn was ab-
So Beryn muſt nedis eche day be aftir ſent: [ſent;
And chefe he was of counſell within the firſt yere,
Thoroughe the wit of Geffrey, that eche dey did hym lere.
This Iſope had a doughtir betwene hym and his wyfe
That was as feir a creature as myght bere lyfe,
Wyfe, and eke bountevouſe, and benyng with all,
That heir ſhuld be aftir his dey of his lordſhippis alle;
So, ſhortly to conclude, the mariage was made
Betwene hir and Beryn, many a man to glade,
Saff the burgeyſis of the town, of falſhede that were
But they wer evir hold ſo low ondir fote [rote;



That they might nat regne, but at laſt faw
To leve their condicioune and their fals la
Beryn and Geffrey made them ſo tame
That they amendit eche dey, and gat a bet
Thus Geffrey made Beryn his enemyes to
And brought hym to worſhip thoroughe hi
Now God us graunt grace to fynde ſuch a
When we have nede! and thus I make an e



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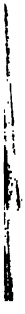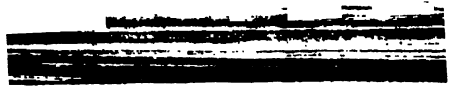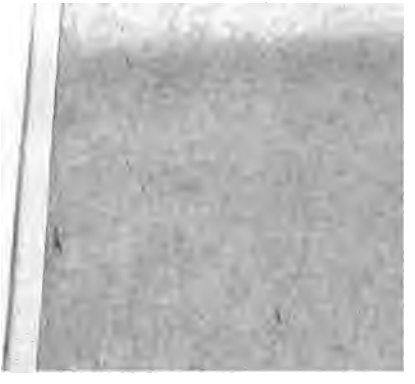
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